

Weekly Compilation of
**Presidential
Documents**



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WEEKLY COMPILATION OF

PRESIDENTIAL DOCUMENTS

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Week Ending Friday, September 22, 2000

**Message to the Senate Transmitting
the Joint Convention on the Safety of
Spent Fuel Management and on the
Safety of Radioactive Waste
Management With Documentation**

September 13, 2000

To the Senate of the United States:

I transmit herewith, for Senate advice and consent to ratification, the Joint Convention on the Safety of Spent Fuel Management and on the Safety of Radioactive Waste Management, done at Vienna on September 5, 1997. Also transmitted for the information of the Senate is the report of the Department of State concerning the Convention.

This Convention was adopted by a Diplomatic Conference convened by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) in September 1997 and was opened for signature in Vienna on September 5, 1997, during the IAEA General Conference, on which date Secretary of Energy Federico Pena signed the Convention for the United States.

The Convention is an important part of the effort to raise the level of nuclear safety around the world. It is companion to and structured similarly to the Convention on Nuclear Safety (CNS), to which the Senate gave its advice and consent on March 25, 1999, and which entered into force for the United States on July 10, 1999. The Convention establishes a series of broad commitments with respect to the safe management of spent fuel and radioactive waste. The Convention does not delineate detailed mandatory standards the Parties must meet, but instead Parties are to take appropriate steps to bring their activities into compliance with the general obligations of the Convention.

The Convention includes safety requirements for spent fuel management when the spent fuel results from the operation of civilian nuclear reactors and radioactive waste

management for wastes resulting from civilian applications.

The Convention does not apply to a Party's military radioactive waste or spent nuclear fuel unless the Party declares it as spent nuclear fuel or radioactive waste for the purposes of the Convention, or if and when such waste material is permanently transferred to and managed within exclusively civilian programs. The Convention contains provisions to ensure that national security is not compromised and that Parties have absolute discretion as to what information is reported on material from military sources.

The United States has initiated many steps to improve nuclear safety worldwide in accordance with its long-standing policy to make safety an absolute priority in the use of nuclear energy, and has supported the effort to develop both the CNS and this Convention. The Convention should encourage countries to improve the management of spent fuel and radioactive waste domestically and thus result in an increase in nuclear safety worldwide.

Consultations were held with representatives from States and the nuclear industry. There are no significant new burdens or unfunded mandates for the States or industry that should result from the Convention. Costs for implementation of the proposed Convention will be absorbed within the existing budgets of affected agencies.

I urge the Senate to act expeditiously in giving its advice and consent to ratification.

William J. Clinton

The White House,
September 13, 2000.

NOTE: This message was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on September 15. This item was not received in time for publication in the appropriate issue.

**Message to the Congress
Transmitting a Report of the
Interagency Arctic Research
Policy Committee**

September 14, 2000

To the Congress of the United States:

As required by section 108(b) of Public Law 98-373 (15 U.S.C. 4107(b)), I transmit herewith the Eighth Biennial Report of the Interagency Arctic Research Policy Committee (February 1, 1998, to January 31, 2000).

William J. Clinton

The White House,
September 14, 2000.

NOTE: This message was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on September 15. This item was not received in time for publication in the appropriate issue.

India-United States Joint Statement

September 15, 2000

Prime Minister Vajpayee and President Clinton today reaffirmed the vision they outlined in March in New Delhi of a closer and qualitatively new relationship between India and the United States in the 21st century. They reiterated their conviction that closer cooperation and stronger partnership between the two countries will be a vital factor for shaping a future of peace, prosperity, democracy, pluralism and freedom for this world. They acknowledged that this vision draws strength from broad political support in both countries.

The two leaders agreed that the wide-ranging architecture of institutional dialogue between the two countries provides a broad-based framework to pursue the vision of a new relationship. They expressed satisfaction at the pace and purposefulness with which the two countries have initiated the consultations envisaged in the dialogue architecture.

In particular, the two leaders are gratified by their recent exchange of visits, and by the

regular foreign policy consultations at the ministerial and senior policy levels:

- They expressed satisfaction at the role that the two countries played in the launch of the Community of Democracies.
- In the economic arena, they reaffirmed their confidence that the three ministerial-level economic dialogues and the High-Level Coordinating Group will improve the bilateral trade environment, facilitate greater commercial cooperation, promote investment, and contribute to strengthening the global financial and trading systems.
- They welcomed the progress of the Joint Working Group on Counter-Terrorism, and agreed that it would also examine linkages between terrorism and narcotics trafficking and other related issues. They noted the opening of a Legal Attache office in New Delhi designed to facilitate cooperation in counter-terrorism and law enforcement.
- The two leaders expressed satisfaction that the joint consultative group on clean energy and environment met in July and agreed to revitalize and expand energy cooperation, while discussing the full range of issues relating to environment and climate change.
- They welcomed the establishment of the Science and Technology forum in July and agreed that the forum should reinvigorate the traditionally strong scientific cooperation between the two countries. In that connection, they noted the contribution of the two science and technology related round-table meetings held in March and September.
- They also welcomed the recent initiatives in the health sector, including the joint statements of June 2000, as examples of deepening collaboration in improving health care and combating AIDS and other major diseases of our time.

The two leaders agreed that India and the United States must build upon this new momentum in their relationship to further enhance mutual understanding and deepen cooperation across the full spectrum of political, economic, commercial, scientific, technological, social, and international issues.

During this visit, the two leaders had productive discussions across a wide range of bilateral, regional, and international developments. In the economic arena, they agree that India's continuing economic reforms, as well as the two countries' complementary strengths and resources, provide strong bases for expansion of economic ties between the two countries. The two leaders recognized the need to deepen cooperation on high-tech trade issues. They noted that the present regime on e-commerce would be rolled over until the next ministerial meeting of the WTO, and that the two countries would cooperate in building a wider international consensus on information technology. The two leaders pledged their joint commitment to bridge the digital divide, both within and between countries, so that the benefits of information technology may advance the economic and social development of all citizens, rich and poor.

The two leaders expressed satisfaction with their agreement on textiles. They also affirmed the need for expansion of bilateral civil aviation ties and agreed to work toward this goal. They recognized the contribution that biotechnology can make to a safe and nutritious food supply, in offering new options to farmers to address problems of pests and diseases, while contributing to environmental protection and enhancing global food security. The governments of the United States and India will explore ways of enhancing cooperation and information exchange, joint collaborative projects and training of scientists in agriculture biotechnology research. The ongoing vaccine research would be further strengthened also, making use of genomics and bioinformatics. The governments of both the United States and India support science-based regulatory activities.

They also noted significant progress on other important economic issues including mutual taxation and investment in the power and other sectors. In regard to double tax-

ation issues, the competent authorities of both sides intend to soon negotiate an arrangement under which collection or recovery of tax will generally be suspended on a reciprocal basis, during pendency of a mutual agreement proceeding. To ensure sustainable economic growth that will lift the lives of rich and poor alike, the two leaders committed support for efforts that will make capital markets more efficient, transparent, and accountable to attract the billions in private investment that is needed.

They recognize the need for appropriate technology for power generation, and the importance of greater South Asian regional cooperation and trade in energy, as well as the development and application of clean technologies that address our respective problems of urban and water pollution. The leaders noted with satisfaction the signings of several major commercial agreements, under which U.S. firms will contribute to the development of the power industry in India.

The United States and India intend to harness their cooperation in emerging scientific and economic sectors into a partnership for defining new ways of fighting hunger, disease, pollution, and other global challenges of our time. The two leaders pledged their strong commitment to address the global challenge of the prevention and control of HIV/AIDS through the close involvement and cooperation between the governments and civil society in the two countries. They expressed support for the collaborative program for research in various areas, including HIV/AIDS vaccine development, through the Joint Working Groups of scientists envisaged by the Joint Statement of June 2000. They agreed to encourage the formation of a business council to combat HIV/AIDS with the active involvement and participation of business and industry to raise awareness in the industrial workplace.

The two leaders discussed international security. They recalled the long history of Indo-U.S. cooperation in UN peacekeeping operations, most recently in Sierra Leone. The two leaders agreed to broaden their cooperation in peacekeeping and other areas of UN activity, including in shaping the future international security system. The two leaders also discussed the evolving security environment

in Asia, recalling their common desire to work for stability in Asia and beyond. They agreed that the Asian Security Dialogue that the two countries have initiated will strengthen mutual understanding.

The two countries reaffirmed their belief that tensions in South Asia can only be resolved by the nations of South Asia, and by peaceful means. India reiterated its commitment to enhancing cooperation, peace, and stability in the region. Both sides stressed the unacceptability of continued violence and bloodshed as a basis for solution of the problems of the region.

The United States and India seek to advance their dialogue on security and non-proliferation issues, building upon the joint statement signed during President Clinton's visit to India in March. They reiterated their respective commitments to forgo nuclear explosive tests. India reaffirmed that, subject to its supreme national interests, it will continue its voluntary moratorium until the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) comes into effect. The United States reaffirmed its intention to work for ratification of the Treaty at the earliest possible date. The Indian government will continue efforts to develop a broad political consensus on the issue of the Treaty, with the purpose of bringing these discussions to a successful conclusion. India also reconfirmed its commitment not to block entry into force of the Treaty. India expects that all other countries, as included in Article XIV of CTBT, will adhere to this Treaty without reservations. The United States and India reiterated their support for a global treaty to halt the production of fissile material for weapons purposes, and for the earliest possible start of Fissile Material Cutoff Treaty negotiations in Geneva. The United States noted its moratorium on the production of fissile material for weapons purposes and supports a multilateral moratorium on such production pending conclusion of a Fissile Material Cutoff Treaty. The United States and India commended the progress made so far on export controls, and pledged to continue to strengthen them. Both countries agreed to continue their dialogue on security and nonproliferation, including on defense posture, which is de-

signed to further narrow differences on these important issues.

In combating international terrorism, the two leaders called on the international community to intensify its efforts, including at the current session of the United Nations. Noting that both India and the United States are targets of continuing terrorism, they expressed their determination to further reinforce bilateral cooperation in this area. They have agreed to hold another round of counter-terrorism consultations in New Delhi later this month, and to pursue work on a Mutual Legal Assistance Treaty.

Finally, the two leaders also paid tribute to the contributions of the Indian-American community in providing a bridge of understanding between the two societies and in strengthening the ties of commerce and culture between the two countries. In this connection, they commended the progress of the initiative to set up a collaborative Global Institute for Science and Technology in India. The two leaders agreed to encourage people-to-people connections between the two nations, and to enlist the cooperation of all sections of their talented and diverse societies in support of that goal.

NOTE: An original was not available for verification of the content of this joint statement. This item was not received in time for publication in the appropriate issue.

Proclamation 7341—National Farm Safety And Health Week, 2000

September 15, 2000

*By the President of the United States
of America*

A Proclamation

Throughout history, America's farmers and ranchers have worked our land with skill, energy, and determination. They have endured floods and droughts, survived bitter winters and scorching summers, seen crops devastated by insects and livestock lost to disease. Through hard times and good times alike they have labored, making American agriculture the most efficient and productive source of food and fiber in the world.

Beyond the natural and economic challenges our Nation's agricultural workers face each year are the daily physical hazards associated with their profession, including handling livestock, using chemicals, and operating powerful machinery. To reduce the level of preventable workplace accidents that have taken such a toll on our country's agricultural communities, engineers and manufacturers have worked diligently to make farm equipment safer. Today, tractors and other farm machinery come with standard safety features such as rollover protection, bypass starting systems, and tamper-proof guarding and shielding.

However, designing safer farm machinery is only part of the solution. We must also ensure that agricultural workers are aware of the benefits of new safety features and that they strive to use and maintain them. Safety and health organizations are accomplishing this vital task by offering hands-on, interactive training programs in farming and ranching communities across the country. Through safety day camps and farm safety programs targeted specifically for children and adolescents growing up on farms and ranches, they are helping to protect the well-being of the most vulnerable members of our agricultural communities.

My Administration is also working hard to improve the health and safety of rural Americans. For example, we created the E-rate program, which, among other things, secures low-cost Internet connections for rural health clinics and hospitals. We have also urged the Congress to fund a meaningful Medicare prescription drug benefit that would provide affordable, dependable coverage to all beneficiaries, including more than 9 million Medicare beneficiaries in rural communities across the Nation. Compared to their urban counterparts, rural beneficiaries have lower incomes and more limited access to pharmacies, and are less likely to have any prescription drug coverage. Rural beneficiaries generally pay more for prescription drugs than urban beneficiaries and are more likely to go without needed medication because of its expense. Meaningful drug coverage for Medicare beneficiaries would help improve the health and quality of life of millions of

older members of our Nation's farming and ranching communities.

All Americans owe a debt of gratitude to our country's farmers and ranchers, whose hard work puts food on our tables and helps ensure our Nation's leadership of the global economy. We can best acknowledge that debt by recognizing the importance of continually improving the health and safety of America's agricultural workers, not only during this special observance, but also throughout the year.

Now, Therefore, I, William J. Clinton, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim September 17 through September 23, 2000, as National Farm Safety and Health Week. I call upon government agencies, organizations, and businesses that serve our agricultural sector to strengthen their efforts to promote safety and health programs among our Nation's farm and ranch workers. I ask agricultural workers to take advantage of the diverse educational and training programs and technical advancements that can help them avoid injury and illness. I also call upon our Nation to recognize Wednesday, September 20, 2000, as a day to focus on the risks facing young people on farms and ranches. Finally, I call upon the citizens of our Nation to reflect on the bounty we enjoy thanks to the labor and dedication of agricultural workers across our land.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this fifteenth day of September, in the year of our Lord two thousand, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twenty-fifth.

William J. Clinton

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 11:18 a.m., September 18, 2000]

NOTE: This proclamation was published in the *Federal Register* on September 19. This item was not received in time for publication in the appropriate issue.

Proclamation 7342—Ovarian Cancer Awareness Week, 2000

September 15, 2000

*By the President of the United States
of America*

A Proclamation

Ovarian cancer is one of the deadliest cancers affecting American women today. This year alone, 14,000 women will die from ovarian cancer, and more than 23,000 will be diagnosed with the disease. While ovarian cancer is very treatable when detected early, currently 75 percent of new cases are not diagnosed until the disease is in its late stages of development, when treatment is less effective. With early detection, women have a survival rate of over 90 percent; diagnosis in its later stages, however, dramatically reduces the chances of survival to just 25 percent.

Unfortunately, there is still no reliable and quick screening test for ovarian cancer like the Pap smear for cervical cancer or the mammogram for breast cancer. In addition, its symptoms—such as abdominal discomfort or bloating, cramps, unaccountable weight gain or loss, abnormal bleeding—can often be mistaken for signs of less serious conditions. Consequently, raising awareness of risk factors for ovarian cancer is a crucial weapon in our effort to save lives. While every woman has the potential to develop ovarian cancer, the risk is higher for those who have never given birth; who are over the age of 50; or who have a family history of ovarian, breast, or colon cancer.

Research into the causes and treatment of ovarian cancer still offers us the best hope for progress in defeating this disease that has taken such a deadly toll on American families. The National Cancer Institute (NCI) is currently sponsoring a large-scale cancer screening trial to explore, among other issues, the usefulness of testing women's blood for abnormally high levels of CA-125, a substance known as a tumor marker, which is often discovered in higher than normal amounts in the blood of women with ovarian cancer. Researchers are also evaluating the effectiveness of ultrasound testing as a tool for early detection. To learn more about the genetic causes of ovarian cancer, the NCI's

Cancer Genetics Network has established registries to track cancers within families to identify possible inherited risks.

As with every disease, knowledge is crucial to overcoming ovarian cancer. Ovarian Cancer Awareness Week offers us an invaluable opportunity to educate Americans about the symptoms and risk factors of the disease, to alert health care providers about the need for vigilance in recognizing those symptoms and risks early, and to promote increased funding for research into more effective methods of diagnosis and treatment. The more we know about ovarian cancer, the more women and their families can live out their lives free from the shadow of this devastating disease.

Now, Therefore, I, William J. Clinton, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim September 17 through September 23, 2000, as Ovarian Cancer Awareness Week. I encourage the American people to observe this week with appropriate ceremonies and activities that raise awareness of the need for early diagnosis and treatment of this deadly disease.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this fifteenth day of September, in the year of our Lord two thousand, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twenty-fifth.

William J. Clinton

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 11:18 a.m., September 18, 2000]

NOTE: This proclamation was published in the *Federal Register* on September 19. This item was not received in time for publication in the appropriate issue.

Executive Order 13167— Amendment to Executive Order 13147, Increasing the Membership of the White House Commission on Complementary and Alternative Medicine Policy

September 15, 2000

By the authority vested in me as President by the Constitution and the laws of the

United States of America, including the Federal Advisory Committee Act, as amended (5 U.S.C. App.), and in order to increase the membership of the White House Commission on Complementary and Alternative Medicine Policy from not more than 15 members to up to 20 members, it is hereby ordered that the second sentence of section 1 of Executive Order 13147 of May 7, 2000, is amended by deleting “not more than 15” and inserting “up to 20” in lieu thereof.

William J. Clinton

The White House,
September 15, 2000.

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 8:45 a.m., September 19, 2000]

NOTE: This Executive order was published in the *Federal Register* on September 20. This item was not received in time for publication in the appropriate issue.

Remarks at a Reception for Hillary Clinton *September 15, 2000*

Thank you very much. First, let me thank Weldon and Connie for getting us all together, and thank all of you for coming and for contributing to Hillary’s campaign. I want to thank the large number of members of the Congressional Black Caucus who were here earlier, who came by to express their support. I’m looking forward to being with them and, I suppose, a lot of you tomorrow night at the dinner.

I won’t keep you long, but I want to make two or three points. First of all, you ought to know how you came to be here tonight. Weldon came up to me one day, and he said, “So Hillary is really going to run.” I said, “Yes.” He said, “Well, you know, I’m from New York,” and I said, “Have I got a deal for you”—[*laughter*—“and here it is.” [*Laughter*]

Anyway, I am very grateful to him and to Connie and to all of you for helping Hillary, and I’ll be quite brief in bringing her on. I’m very grateful that I had the chance to serve, and I’m very grateful that the country is in better shape. And I’m glad that we were able to do some things that people hadn’t

done before, to reach out to people within our country, and also beyond our borders, that had too long been overlooked.

She had a lot to do with that. She went to Africa before I did. She went to India and Pakistan and Bangladesh before I did. She has been to more countries, trying to help empower poor people and support democracy and support women’s rights and support getting girls in schools where they don’t go to school, than any First Lady in the history of this country by a long, long way.

She helped to establish this Vital Voices network of women around the world that have worked for peace in Northern Ireland. I just got a—I was just in Nigeria, and when I mentioned it, all the members stood up and started applauding in this audience. The guys in the audience didn’t know what I was talking about, but the girls in the audience knew about Hillary and their deal. It was great.

So I’m grateful for what she did there. What I want to say is that I think in a lot of ways this election is as important, in some ways maybe more important, than the election of 1992, which brought Al Gore and me to the White House, Tipper and Hillary and our crowd. Because then the country was in bad shape, and the people took a chance on me. But I don’t know that it was much of a chance, since the country was in bad shape. [*Laughter*] Everybody knew that we had to do something different.

Now, we’re laughing, but you know I’m telling the truth, right? How many people do you think went in that room and said, in that voting booth, “I don’t know about this guy. He’s a Governor of this little State. I’m not sure where it is. I mean, you know, they say all these bad things about him, but oh, what the heck”?

Now, the country is in good shape. And I think sometimes it’s harder to make a good decision in good times than it is in bad times, because you have to actually decide. What do you want? Where do you want your country to go? What do you want it to be? And the reason I feel so strongly about this election, it’s the first time in 26 years I haven’t been on the ballot. [*Laughter*]

My party has got a new leader. My family has got a new candidate. [*Laughter*] My official title is Cheerleader in Chief. [*Laughter*]

But the reason I feel strongly about it is, we worked so hard to turn this country around, get it going in the right direction, and now there's a real hard decision, or set of decisions, to be made. And I can tell you, after 8 years here, obviously it matters who the President and Vice President are. It matters hugely—every single Senate seat, every single House seat.

I wanted to say, in the presence of the Black Caucus members that were here, even when we went into the minority, nothing I achieved here, of any real substance, could have been possible if they hadn't stuck with me every step of the way. It matters, and it really matters who's in the Senate.

And we need to keep changing as a country, but we need to build on what we've done. And when I think of all the great questions facing America, how are we going to provide education for the largest and most diverse group of kids in our history, and I think how long Hillary's been working on that, and the results we got because of her efforts when we were at home in Arkansas; when I think about how are we going to balance the demands of work and rearing children, which is a challenge not just for poor working people but for middle-class working people and for a lot of people that are upper middle class, and I think that, you know, she spent a lifetime working on that. Everybody talks about it now. One of the most popular pieces of legislation we ever passed, and she helped pass it, was the family and medical leave law. Over 20 million people took some time off when a baby was born or a parent was sick without losing their jobs. Twenty-two years ago—22 years ago—she founded a statewide advocacy group for families and children at home, long before it was fashionable to think about.

When I think about how are we going to spread this prosperity to people and places that have been left behind, that's what she spent 8 years doing as First Lady, going to places to promote microcredit and economic empowerment, all around the world. Same issues apply in upstate New York and the inner-city areas that have been left behind. And I could go on and on and on.

We need somebody who's spent a lifetime working on the things that we need to decide

to do now, because most people don't have to do it now. And we need somebody who thinks about the future all the time. And so even if I didn't know her better than anybody in this room, I'd be for her because of what she's done and what she's achieved and what she wants to do.

You know, most of the time we've been hit so many times, between the two of us, we're kind of thick-skinned. But one thing sometimes people say that really steams me is—I heard somebody the other day say, "Well, she wouldn't even be running if she weren't First Lady."

Let me tell you something. If you look at her record as a lawyer, as a public servant, she spent 30 years helping everybody else. She never asked anybody to do anything for her. But if she hadn't married me so long ago and chosen to live a life of volunteer public service, she could have been doing this 20, 25 years ago.

So you get somebody now who has spent a lifetime in public service, always giving to other candidates, other causes, always leading by the power of her example, who actually has spent a lifetime doing what America needs to focus on most, today, when we think about the future.

This is a big decision, and you've helped to make sure it will be the right one, and I am very grateful to you. But you will be very proud of what she does for New York and America.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:30 p.m. at the Mayflower Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to reception hosts Weldon and Connie Latham. This item was not received in time for publication in the appropriate issue.

The President's Radio Address

September 16, 2000

Good morning. I'm joining you today from the Washington Home, a nursing home in our Nation's Capital that has been delivering quality care to older Americans for more than 100 years now. The seniors here with me receive top-quality assistance from a dedicated and attentive staff.

Every one of the 1.6 million Americans living in nursing homes all across our Nation deserve the same quality care. And as the baby boomers retire, the demand for quality care will continue to rise even higher. By the year 2030, the number of Americans over the age of 85 will double, making compassionate, quality nursing home care even more important.

But while the majority of nursing homes today provide excellent care, too many of our seniors and Americans with disabilities in homes, in too many of those homes, are not getting the proper attention they deserve. According to current research, the number one culprit is chronic understaffing. When there are too few caregivers for the number of patients, the quality of care goes down.

A recent study from the Department of Health and Human Services reports that more than half of America's nursing homes don't have the minimum staffing levels necessary to guarantee quality care. And too often the staff that is there isn't properly trained. Patients in these homes are more likely to lose too much weight, develop bed sores, fall into depression. More than 30 percent are dehydrated, malnourished, at much higher risk for illness and infection.

Older Americans who have worked hard all their lives deserve respect, not neglect, and for more than 7 years now, Vice President Gore and I have acted to improve the quality of care in our Nation's nursing homes. In 1995 we put in place new regulations to crack down on abuse and neglect, stepping up on-site inspections of nursing homes.

That same year, when Congress tried to eliminate Federal assurances of nursing home quality, I said no. Then in 1998 I issued an Executive order, requiring all States to increase investigations of nursing homes and fine those that failed to provide the residents with adequate care.

Today I'm taking four new steps to improve nursing home conditions across America. First, working with Senator Grassley, a Republican from Iowa, and Senator Breaux, a Democrat from Louisiana, along with Representatives Waxman, Stark, and Gephardt, I'm sending legislation to Congress next week that I believe can be enacted this year. It will create \$1 billion in new grants to boost

staffing levels in nursing homes that need it most, to improve recruitment and retention, and to give more training to caregivers, rewarding the best performing nursing homes.

While working to improve nursing home care, we have to act swiftly to keep nursing homes safe. This legislation will impose immediate financial penalties on nursing homes that are endangering the safety of their residents, and then those funds will be used to improve patient care.

Second, I'm directing the Health Care Financing Administration to establish, within 2 years, minimum staffing requirements for all nursing homes participating in the Federal Medicare and Medicaid programs. The agency will also develop recommendations to ensure that nursing homes receive the necessary payments for high-quality care.

Third, we are taking new measures to educate caregivers at nursing homes. Just this week we launched a new campaign in America's 17,000 nursing homes to identify residents who are at risk and prevent them becoming dehydrated or malnourished.

And finally, to help families select the right nursing home, we'll require all facilities to post the number of health care personnel serving their patients.

Of all the obligations we owe to one another, our most sacred duty is to our parents. They kept us safe from harm when we were children, and we must do the same for them as they grow older. They shouldn't go another day without the care they deserve wherever they live, in whatever nursing home facility.

President Kennedy once said, "It is not enough for a great nation merely to have added new years to life. Our objective must be also to add new life to those years."

The steps we're taking today will help to bring new life to our Nation's seniors by bringing a new level of quality to America's nursing homes.

Thanks for listening.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:06 a.m. from the Washington Home.

Exchange With Reporters at the Dedication of the Mahatma Gandhi Memorial

September 16, 2000

India-United States Relations

Q. Mr. President, how would you describe the visit, overall, of the Indian Prime Minister? What has this visit meant to Indo-U.S. relations?

The President. Well, I think it's been a great success. It sort of rounds out our efforts to take a different turn in our relationships, to deepen and broaden them. As I have said many times, I am profoundly grateful for the reception that I received from the Prime Minister, the Government, and the people of India when I came with my daughter and my mother-in-law a few months ago.

I hope that this change in partnership goes beyond my service, into a whole new era of partnership between India and the United States.

You know, one thing I didn't mention a moment ago is that, in addition to the Government of India, Americans who are of Indian heritage also contributed to this magnificent memorial. There is probably no country outside India that has been more enriched by Indians than the United States. So that's another reason, and I think it's important we continue to go forward together.

Mahatma Gandhi

Q. Mr. President, has Mahatma Gandhi made an influence on your life, sir, in any way?

The President. Well, when I was a boy, actually, I was a profound admirer of Martin Luther King, and I began to read all his writings. And when I read that he was so influenced by Gandhi, then I began to read about Gandhi. I was, I don't know, 17, 18, or something like that.

H-1B Visas

Q. Mr. President, since you talked about the Indian contribution—about immigration, H-1B visas, does your administration want to do something?

The President. Let me say this, the number of H-1B visas will be increased in this Congress, I believe. I'll be quite surprised

if it isn't. The issue is, how much will it be increased by, and can we use the occasion of increasing the quotas to get some more funds from the companies that are hiring people for the training of our own people, who could also do these jobs—the people who are already here—if they had training? So there's no question that we're going to increase the visas.

India-United States Relations

Q. Mr. President, the fact is, you said you're very excited; it was a very positive visit. In concrete terms, where do you see the alliance going now? Where in concrete terms do you see India and the United States as natural allies going ahead?

The President. Well, I hope in the years ahead we'll be better economic partners, better political partners. I hope we'll work together through the United Nations and other international forums. I hope we'll both be able to help to turn back what could otherwise be a dangerous tide of proliferation of dangerous weapons, not just nuclear warheads on missiles, either, chemical weapons, biological weapons. I hope we'll be able to turn that back.

And I hope some day that there will be some constructive role we could play as a partner in working with India and others to bring peace on the subcontinent.

Q. Will you be a strategic ally? Will we be a strategic ally?

The President. We've done enough talking today. [Laughter] If you want to ask the Prime Minister a question—[laughter]—

Post-Presidential Visit to India

Q. Mr. President, do you see yourself going back to India after post-Presidency?

The President. Absolutely. Absolutely. I hope I'll be able to go back to India for the rest of my life. I don't mean permanently, but I mean to keep going back, always.

NOTE: The exchange began at 11:04 a.m. in a park at Massachusetts Ave. and 21st St. NW., near the Indian Embassy. In his remarks, the President referred to Prime Minister Atal Bahari Vajpayee of India; and the President's mother-in-law, Dorothy Rodham.

Statement on the Inter-American Convention Against Corruption

September 16, 2000

Yesterday I joined the leaders of 19 nations in the Western Hemisphere in ratifying the Inter-American Convention Against Corruption.

The Convention establishes a treaty-based regime among members of the Organization of American States (OAS) to combat official corruption. OAS members who have ratified the Convention will have to criminalize acts of corruption if they have not already done so. Most important, they will have to criminalize the bribery of foreign government officials, a practice that punishes honest businesses, undermines economic development, and destroys confidence in law. The United States pressed for this provision, and it is a breakthrough in our effort to persuade other countries to adopt legislation similar to our Foreign Corrupt Practices Act.

The Convention will strengthen America's ability to cooperate with, and receive assistance from, countries in the hemisphere in efforts to prevent, investigate, and prosecute corruption, through extradition, mutual legal assistance, and other measures. It will also enhance law enforcement capabilities in other areas, given the links between corruption and organized criminal activity.

This Convention was the first multilateral agreement against bribery to be adopted anywhere in the world. It is a victory for good government, fair competition, and open trade through our hemisphere.

Remarks at the Congressional Black Caucus Foundation Dinner

September 16, 2000

Thank you very much, Chairman Clyburn; dinner chair Eddie Bernice Johnson, my friend of 28 years—and didn't she give a great introduction to the Vice President? You better go on the road, girl. *[Laughter]* Our foundation chair, Eva Clayton, and all the members and former members of the CBC, especially to my friend Bill Clay. We wish you well and Godspeed on your retirement,

and I thank you for 8 years of our good partnership.

To Mrs. Coretta Scott King and all the distinguished citizens in the audience, but especially to the two whom I had the great honor to award the Presidential Medal of Freedom, Marian Wright Edelman and Reverend Jesse Jackson, thank you for being here with us tonight.

I thank Lou Stokes and Phylicia Rashad and want to join in congratulating the award winners, my friend Arthur Eve, whose son did such a good job working for the Clinton-Gore administration; Kenneth Hill; Rodney Carroll, who has been great on our Welfare to Work program. Tom Joyner, who lets me jaw on his radio program from time to time. Even I never got an eight-page spread in *Ebony*; I don't know about that. *[Laughter]*

To Tavis Smiley and to the family of our friend LeBaron Taylor; Bill Kennard, and Ambassador Sisulu, thank you for what you said about our friend Nelson Mandela. I thank General Reno and Secretary Slater and Secretary Herman and Deputy Attorney General Holder and our SBA Director, Aida Alvarez, and all the people from our White House team who are here, and from the entire administration.

I thought the Vice President gave a great speech, and I'm looking forward to getting rid of that trouble adjective at the beginning of his title in just a couple of months now.

Now, there was nothing subliminal about that. We Democrats don't have subliminal advertising. *[Laughter]* I also want to thank Senator Lieberman, who has been a friend since Hillary and I met him 30 years ago when he was running for the State Senate in New Haven. And I can tell you that if he is the Vice President of this country, you will be very, very proud of him. He has done a great job, and he has been a great friend of mine.

I want to bring you a warm welcome from Hillary. She wishes she could be here tonight, but she's otherwise occupied. They sent the one in our family who is not running for office this year to speak to you tonight.

I've been honored to be at every one of these dinners since I became President. Tonight I came mostly to listen and to clap and to say thanks. Thank you for your friendship,

your leadership, and your support. Thank you for giving me the chance, John Lewis, to walk with you in Selma this year. Thank you, for those of you who went back to Africa with me when we went to Nigeria and Tanzania. Thank you for working with me to reach out to the people of Africa and the Caribbean to try to build their countries through trade.

Thank you, for those of you who helped me to relieve the debt of the poor countries and to increase our fight against AIDS and TB and malaria around the world.

The Vice President said that there are so many people who could say that the CBC covered their back. Covered their back? [Laughter] When they took a torch to me and lit the fire, you brought the buckets and poured the water on it. And I thank you. Thank you.

But mostly, I want to thank you for taking our Nation to higher ground, for standing with Al Gore and me in our simple but profound mission to make sure that everyone counts and everyone has a chance, to make sure that we act as if we all do better when we help each other.

I can't thank you enough for your role in all the good things that have happened in the last 8 years. It's all been recited. I guess what I would like for you to know is that there are a lot of days when I just felt like the troubadour, but other people had to play in the orchestra and even write the songs. And nothing—nothing good that I have achieved would have been possible without the Congressional Black Caucus, our other friends in Congress, and especially Vice President Al Gore. And I thank you all for that.

I just want to say two serious things about the future tonight. The first is that when Al Gore says you ain't seen nothin' yet, I agree with him. We've spent a lot of time in the last 8 years just trying to turn this country around and get it together and get it moving in the right direction. And now, for the first time in our lifetime, we have both prosperity and the absence of serious internal crisis and external threat.

We actually can build the future of our dreams for our kids. We could get rid of child poverty. We could give every child in America the chance at a world-class education for

the first time. We could open the doors of college to all. We could take Social Security and Medicare out there beyond the life of the baby boomers and add that prescription drug benefit.

We could do a lot of things with these unbelievable discoveries in science and technology. But we have to make a decision. And so the second point I want to make is, sometimes it's harder to make a good decision in good times than bad times. I know the people took a chance on me in 1992, but give me a break. The country was in a ditch; it wasn't that much of a chance. [Laughter]

I mean, you know, they—I don't know how many voters went into the polling place and thought, "You know, I don't know if I want to vote for that guy. He's a Governor. President Bush said he was the Governor of a small southern State, and I don't even know where that place is on the map, and he looks too young, and everybody says he's terrible." But we had to change.

Now things are going well, and people are comfortable and confident, and we have options. So it's up to you to make sure that people ask the right question and answer it in this election season, that we say we cannot afford to pass up the chance of a lifetime, maybe the chance of a half a century, to build the future of our dreams for our children.

And there is a lot at stake. You've heard it all tonight, just about, how we're fighting for strong schools and modern classrooms and a higher minimum wage and all the other things. I would like to mention one other thing that hasn't been talked about. We ought to be fighting for an end to delay and discrimination against highly qualified minority candidates for the Federal courts.

This administration has named 62 African-American judges, 3 times the number of the previous two administrations combined, with the highest ratings from the ABA in 40 years. Yet, we know, in spite of that, that women and minority candidates are still much more likely to be delayed or denied.

So even though this is a nonprofit organization, I can ask you to remember Judge Ronnie White, the first African-American on the Missouri Supreme Court, denied on the party-line vote. The fourth circuit, with the largest African-American population in the

country, never had an African-American judge. Last year I told you I nominated James Wynn, a distinguished judge from North Carolina. After 400 days, with his senior Senator still standing in the courthouse door, the Senate hasn't found one day to give Judge Wynn even a hearing.

This year I nominated Roger Gregory of Virginia, the first man in his family to finish high school, a teacher at Virginia State University, where his mother once worked as a maid, a highly respected litigator with the support of his Republican and his Democratic Senator from Virginia. But so far, we're still waiting for him to get a hearing. And then there's Kathleen McCree Lewis in Michigan and others all across this country.

So once again, I ask the Senate to do the right thing and quit closing the door on people who are qualified to serve.

Now, they say I can't ask you to vote for anybody, but I will say this. If you want no more delay and denial of justice, it would help if you had Al Gore and Joe Lieberman and Senators like the First Lady.

If you want a tax code that helps working families with child care, long-term care, and access to college education, it would help if you had Al Gore and Joe Lieberman and Charlie Rangel as the chairman of the House Ways and Means Committee.

If you want strong civil rights and equal rights laws and you want them enforced, it would really help if you had Al Gore and Joe Lieberman and you made John Conyers the chairman of the Judiciary Committee.

If you want the intelligence policy of this country to reflect genuine intelligence—[laughter]—it would help if you had Al Gore and Joe Lieberman and Julian Dixon as the chairman of the Intelligence Committee.

But I will say again, sometimes it is harder to make good decisions in good times than bad times. Sometimes it's easier to think of some little thing you've got to quibble about. Remember the African proverb: "Smooth seas do not make skillful sailors." My friends, we've got to be skillful sailors.

I thank you from the bottom of my heart. Toni Morrison once said I was the first black President this country ever had. [Laughter] And I would rather have that than a Nobel Prize, and I'll tell you why. Because some-

where, in the deep and lost threads of my own memory, are the roots of understanding of what you have known. Somewhere, there was a deep longing to share the fate of the people who had been left out and left behind, sometimes brutalized, and too often ignored or forgotten.

I don't exactly know who all I have to thank for that. But I'm quite sure I don't deserve any credit for it, because whatever I did, I really felt I had no other choice.

I want you to remember that I had a partner that felt the same way, that I believe he will be one of the great Presidents this country ever had, and that for the rest of my days, no matter what—no matter what—I will always be there for you.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:33 p.m. at the Washington Convention Center. In his remarks, he referred to Representative James E. Clyburn, chair, Congressional Black Caucus; former Representative Louis Stokes and actress Phylicia Rashad, dinner masters of ceremony; Representatives Eva M. Clayton, chair, and William (Bill) Clay and Julian C. Dixon, board members, Congressional Black Caucus Foundation; Coretta Scott King, widow of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.; New York State Deputy Assembly Speaker Arthur O. Eve and his son, former Special Assistant to the President for Political Affairs Eric V. Eve; Kenneth Hill, executive director, Detroit Area Pre-College Engineering Program, Inc.; Rodney Carroll, chief operating officer, Welfare to Work Partnership; radio morning show host Tom Joyner; talk show host Tavis Smiley; Ambassador Sheila Sisulu and former President Nelson Mandela of South Africa; and author Toni Morrison.

Remarks at a Brunch for Hillary Clinton in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

September 17, 2000

Thank you very much. I was telling Ed that I left the Black Caucus dinner last night about 12:15—the Congressional Black Caucus—I was hoping that I would be *compos mentis* by the time I was introduced to speak, and you gave me such a warm welcome, I'm about to wake up. [Laughter]

Let me say, first of all, how grateful I am to all of you for being here, and so many of you have already helped Hillary. I appreciate you being here, and I'll explain in a minute why we're doing this.

I want to thank Congressmen Borski and Congressman Brady for being not only friends of Philadelphia and Pennsylvania but true friends of mine in the Congress. I'm very proud of what we've done together.

I can't say enough about Ed. It's been wonderful for me to close out my Presidency with a chairman of the Democratic Party who has as much energy as I do—[laughter]—because we knew we would have to work, and work we did. That first 7 months of this year, I don't think either one of us slept very much, but we worked very hard. And everybody was saying, "Oh, the Democrats didn't have a chance. We were all going to get wiped out. We couldn't hold the White House."

And people thought Rendell and I needed a dose of reality serum because we'd go around and say, "What do you mean? We're going to win this thing. It's"—[laughter]—didn't we? And we would go around, and these people in farflung places, a long way from Philadelphia and Washington, would look at us like, "What have these guys been drinking tonight?" [Laughter]

You know, now all those people who were doubters think we're geniuses. And we just need about 50 more days of effort so that they'll be right. But I'm very grateful to you, Mr. Mayor, because after you did such a good job here, you could have taken a well-deserved rest, and instead, you went on the road, and we've had a good run. I'm very grateful.

Let me say to—I don't even have the words to express the gratitude I feel to the people of Pennsylvania and especially the people of Philadelphia in this area who have given me and Al Gore such an overwhelming endorsement in 1992, and in 1996, the margin was truly breathtaking. I will never forget it. It does an amazing thing for a Democratic campaign for President not to have to worry about whether you're going to win in Pennsylvania.

What happens—I can just tell you, after the conventions are over, the candidates and

their folks, they sit down and look at a map. And they look at where they're going to get to 270 electoral votes, what they have to carry that's up in the air, what they have to go take away, what they have to defend. And after the convention, there are only a relatively small number of days left. And the candidates accept their public funding, so they have a limited amount of resources to travel, to organize, to advertise.

And so it's like this elaborate chess game, quite apart from what we all see when we pick up the papers every day and they're talking about issues, debating issues—and, this year, debating the debates, of all things—and what's in the debates. Underneath it all there is the sure knowledge that we still have—since we're dedicating the Constitution Center today, we still have the same system we started with. We elect Presidents by States and by the electoral votes of States, which is all the House Members plus two Senators. That's how many electoral votes every State has. And even after reinforcement, when they get shifted around, it all still adds up to 538, and you have to have 270 to win.

And Pennsylvania has 23 votes. And it's also in the heartland of America, with Ohio and Michigan and Illinois and Wisconsin and Minnesota, and you go over to New Jersey and up to New York. If you have Pennsylvania, it drastically increases your chances of carrying New Jersey and of carrying Ohio. No Republican has been elected since the Civil War without carrying Ohio. And it is very hard for a Democrat to be elected without carrying Pennsylvania.

So I am profoundly grateful, because for two Presidential elections we got to go play on their field. If you're playing on the other team's end of the field, you have a chance to score. And the people of Pennsylvania trusted me and Al Gore to deliver for America, and I hope you're not disappointed. It's been an honor. [Applause] Thank you.

There's something else I would like to say, and I won't give my standard speech because it's Sunday and a lot of you want to go do something else, and because you've heard it before, but I will say this. I promised myself between the first of the year and election day I would never, ever give a public speech

without reminding people that it is sometimes more difficult to make the right decision when times are good than when times are bad. And I know the American people took a chance on me in '92, but maybe it wasn't such a big chance because the country was in trouble, right?

But now things are going well, and there must be clarity. People have got to stop and think about what is it they want for their future. Because I can tell you, in my lifetime, we've never had such a good chance to build the future of our dreams for the children that are in this room today and all the other kids in this country. We could actually do things that were unthinkable when I ran for President. We could actually get the country out of debt for the first time since Andrew Jackson was President. We now know, without any question, what it takes to turn around a failing public school, and we could put in place a system if we had the will and were willing to commit the resources to do it, that would guarantee a world-class education to all the kids in this country.

We know how to do it now. When I started on this back in 1983, we had some ideas, but we didn't know. We now have mountains of evidence. I was in a school in Harlem the other day, a grade school. Two years ago 86 percent of the kids—80 percent of the kids, excuse me—were reading below grade level, doing math below grade level—2 years ago. This year—74 percent of the kids are doing reading and math at or above grade level—in 2 years. We know how to do this. Then the question is, are we going to do it for all these kids? We've got more kids in schools than ever before; it's the most diverse student body. We could do this.

We could actually get rid of child poverty. We could provide health insurance to all the working families in the country, something we've never done. We could turn around the environmental problems of the country, in the world, including global warming, in a way that would generate hundreds of thousands—maybe even over a million—jobs for the American economy alone.

And all the best stuff is still out there. The human genome project, I believe, will have young mothers bringing babies home from the hospital within 10 years, with a life ex-

pectancy of 90 years. So all the best stuff is still out there. We've got to make the right decisions. And we need people who understand the future and understand the bedrock values and institutions that build the future of America and who are curious and thinking about what all these dizzying changes mean.

I know you can never make an ad out of it, but I really think one of the best reasons to vote for Al Gore is his relentless curiosity and passion about the future and the issues that are central to the future. And one of the best reasons to vote for Hillary is that she has always understood the importance of taking everybody along into the future.

So that's really important. But let me tell you why we're here. She has been very blessed. I thought she did great in that debate the other night, even though it was two on one half the time. *[Applause]* Thank you. I was really, really proud of her. I thought she did best when they got meanest, and that's good. It's a contact sport. *[Laughter]* But it also matters whether you're big or little, and she's nothing if not big, and I'm proud of her.

She's doing well in the campaign. She's been very successful with fundraising, both in New York, where an astonishing number of people who have never been really involved before have helped her, and around the country. But in order to maximize her impact between now and the election day, she has to raise more money for her campaign—in \$1,000 and \$2,000 contributions; if nobody has given to her at all before, they can give \$2,000—and for the Democratic Committee, more money in so-called hard money.

I think all of you know that there's a limit under our Federal laws how much soft money can be spent, unless there's a matching amount of hard money. And we need a lot of contributions at a more modest but generous level. So I told Ed I was coming here today, and he said that he would try to get us some more help in Philadelphia.

Philadelphia is one of the States, outside New York, that can be most beneficially impacted by having a good Senator from New York, because you can't be a responsible New York Senator unless you have a great urban policy. You can't serve there. But it's like

Pennsylvania. You also can't be good unless you know something about agriculture. Most people don't know that both New York and Pennsylvania are huge agricultural States.

But it's very, very important, as we get down here in the stretch when—I think she said on her debate the other night there are 32—32—third party committees who can spend 100 percent soft money. If you set up one of these sort of front committees to attack someone—unless it's the Republican Party—if it's some other committee with some funny name that's misleading, 100 percent of their money can be soft money. They just throw the stuff on the air and lob those bombshells at you. And believe me, the better she does, the more they want to beat her. I know something about that.

So it's very important that she be able to make the most use of the resources that have already been committed to her and have enough to stand up to whatever comes in the next, how many, 50-odd days between now and the election.

But I think she's going to win if she has the horses to stay in the race until the end. And that's what this is about. And I think when she does, a huge number of people who don't even vote for her the first time will wonder what they were thinking about on election day. And people will see what I have known for 30 years. I have never seen anybody with the same combination of mind and passion and heart and, actually, ability to get her ideas transformed into reality that she does.

I get tickled. They attack her on health care. You might be interested to know that even though our health care plan didn't pass in '94, it got further than Richard Nixon's health care plan, further than Lyndon Johnson's health care plan—I mean, Jimmy Carter's health care plan—and further than Harry Truman's health care plan. And the same people that attacked Harry Truman attacked Hillary and me, with the same results in the next congressional election.

But after a while, people decided he was right, and they'll decide we're right, too. It would be a better country if every working family could afford health insurance. And we've made a lot of progress. We're insuring over 2 million kids now. We have a law on

the books that will allow 5 to get health insurance.

One of the things that went in her health care plan was a strong Patients' Bill of Rights. One of the reasons the health insurance companies campaigned against it was because there was a strong Patients' Bill of Rights in it. And now, 70-something percent of the American people want a strong Patients' Bill of Rights because they've been, or they know someone who's been, on the receiving end of a medical decision being made by somebody other than a medical professional.

So these are big, big issues here. The country is in great shape. We're doing right. If everybody is serious about what the choice is, I feel wonderful about what's going to happen in the Presidential race, the Senate races, the House races.

I want to say one other thing, since I'm in Pennsylvania. We're trying to win—if we just win six or seven House seats, the Democrats will win back the House. And we probably will, and then a few. But what you should know is, today, if Mr. Corzine wins in New Jersey—and I believe he will—and Hillary wins—and we will have two Senate seats that are in some question, one in Nevada, where we're still behind, but we have a chance; one in Virginia, where Chuck Robb is running against the former Governor, and I believe with all my heart Senator Robb is going to win because he's one of the bravest people I've ever known in public life. He's got more courage than is good for him sometimes, given his State. But those are the only two seats we have in play. We are 11 points ahead in Florida for a Republican seat; almost 10 points ahead in Delaware for a Republican seat. We are 25 points ahead in Georgia for a seat previously held by a Republican. We are ahead today, only 5 days after the Minnesota primary, for a seat held by a Republican. One of the two candidates for the Democratic nomination in Florida—I mean, in Washington State, is already ahead of the incumbent Republican Senator, and the other one is nearly ahead. We are even, to a little ahead, in Missouri. We are within five points in Michigan, where our candidate is fabulous but has been badly outspent, and if she can get back up and go all the way, she'll be fine. And I believe we can do right

well here if our candidate had enough money.

So it's something I want you to think about because the future of the Supreme Court is at stake; the future of all these policies is at stake. And I can tell you, every single Senate seat really does matter. As President, I know. I mean every single one of them has an enormous impact on the way Americans live and the framework within which we build our future.

So that's it. If you can help Hillary with some more of these contributions, if you know anybody that hasn't made one, may be willing to make a modest contribution to her campaign, it could make a big difference to her. Because remember, in New York, it's the Democratic Party against the Republican Party, Hillary against her Republican opponent, and then they have 32 other committees, bringing pleasant messages—[laughter]—of every conceivable stripe.

She'll do just fine with it. She showed last week she could take a punch, and she can take a lot of them. But she needs to have something to respond, and if you can help, I'll be profoundly grateful.

Thanks again for everything you've done for Hillary.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:40 a.m. at the City Tavern. In his remarks, he referred to Edward G. Rendell, general chair, Democratic National Committee; Jon S. Corzine, a candidate for U.S. Senate from New Jersey; and former Gov. George Allen, a candidate for U.S. Senate from Virginia.

Remarks at the Groundbreaking Ceremony for the National Constitution Center in Philadelphia *September 17, 2000*

Thank you very much. The final sentence of the preamble: "We do ordain and establish this Constitution of the United States." Today we come to ordain and establish this Constitution Center, so I begin by thanking Senator Specter, Senator Santorum; Representatives Brady, Borski, and Hoeffel, who are here; Mayor Street and Mayor Rendell; Chairman Bogle; President Torsella; Judge Giles, Judge Becker; Park Service Director

Marie Rust and all of your employees; President Rodin; and Lee Annenberg, we thank you and Walter so much for your continuing generosity and vision. And most of all, I'd like to thank the people of Philadelphia, who have contributed so much to make this center a reality.

This is an appropriate thing to do, I think, in the millennial year and in the political season. I thank Senator Specter for the plug for First Lady, and I hope he will not be too severely rebuked at the Republican caucus in a few days. [Laughter]

But if it is the season of political olympics in America, we shouldn't forget that we have over 600 of our athletes halfway across the world in Australia. And I think we ought to give a big hand to the female 400-meter free style relay team, who set a world record in winning a gold medal yesterday. [Applause] I might say, just as an aside, I saw a television special which said that this is the oldest women's swimming team we have ever fielded, and the first time the women's team has ever been older than the men. But I don't think they meant that in the same way I do. I think their average is about 21 years and 6 months. [Laughter]

I bring you greetings, also, from the First Lady, who wanted to be here today, because of her efforts to save the charters of our freedom.

As you may have read, and I hope you have, this weekend at the National Archives in Washington, scientists and engineers unveiled new, state-of-the-art technology to display and better preserve the Constitution, Bill of Rights, and Declaration of Independence. We have been struggling now for many, many years to show it to the largest possible number of visitors without having the precious old paper erode and the ink bleed away into the mists of memory.

This effort to preserve the documents is part of America's Millennium Project to save our treasures, from Thomas Edison's invention factory to Harriet Tubman's home, from the Old Glory that inspired Francis Scott Key to write the "Star-Spangled Banner" to Abraham Lincoln's summer residence at the Old Soldiers Home in Washington.

It is the largest historic preservation effort in our history. It has garnered already over

\$100 million in public and private funds, and I'm very proud of the First Lady for thinking of it and executing it. It will complement this Constitution Center for you to know that the Constitution is alive and well and preserved for all time, along with the Bill of Rights and the Declaration of Independence.

Two hundred and thirteen years ago today, a few hundred feet from where we stand, 39 men signed a document that would change the world. Some of them—Washington, Franklin, Madison—are remembered today as our greatest citizens. In light of the naturalization ceremony just held, I think it's worth noting that 8 of those 39 signers were immigrants, including Alexander Hamilton, born in the West Indies, and James Wilson of Pennsylvania, who spoke with a heavy Scottish brogue.

Those who put their names in the Constitution understood the enormity of what they were attempting to do, to create a representative democracy with a central government strong enough to unify a vast, diverse, then and now politically fractious nation, but a government limited enough to allow individual liberty and enterprise to flourish.

Well, 213 years later, we can say with thanks, they succeeded not only in keeping liberty alive but in providing a strong yet flexible framework within which America could keep moving forward, generation after generation, toward making real the pure ideals embodied in their words.

How have we moved forward? Well, today, our liberties extend not just to white males with property but to all Americans, including those who were just signed in. Our concept of freedom no longer includes the so-called freedom to keep slaves and buy and sell them or to extract profit from the labor of children. And now our Constitution is the inspiration behind scores of other democratic governments all over the world, from Japan to Poland, from Guatemala to South Africa.

Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes said, "The Constitution is an experiment, as all life is an experiment." The new center we begin today will tell the story of that experiment, showing how each generation of Americans has been called on not only to preserve liberty but to enhance it, not only to protect the institutions that secure liberty but to

renew and modify them to the demands of the present with an eye to the future.

Our generation has also begun to meet that sacred duty, for at the dawn of a new century we are clearly a nation in renewal. Like generations before us, we are renewing the promise of America by meeting the challenges of our time with new ideas rooted in old values: faith and freedom, opportunity and responsibility, family and community.

This new center is a symbol of that broader renewal. It will use the latest technologies to bring alive to visitors the meaning of our founding documents. Perhaps the greatest testament to our national renewal is, we are becoming as a people simultaneously more diverse, as you can see from those who just became American citizens, and more tolerant.

The degree of diversity in America today would probably astound the Founders. But if they thought about it just for a moment, they would recognize it as the inevitable product of their own handiwork. James Madison, himself, predicted America would be made stable by a strong Constitution that would draw from other countries "men who love liberty and wish to partake of its blessings." Even in the beginning we were a diverse country, compared to most.

A few years ago, I went to Germany on a state visit. And I presented to the Chancellor of Germany a copy of the Declaration of Independence, printed in Philadelphia on July 5, 1776, in German, for the German speakers who were already here.

A newspaper way back then wrote, "If the new Federal Government be adopted, thousands would embark immediately to America. Germany and Ireland would send colonies of cultivators of the Earth, while England and Scotland would fill our towns and cities with industrious mechanics and manufacturers."

Well, today, we benefit from the skills and drive of a new wave of immigrants from Nigeria and India, Poland and China, Mexico and Russia, and as you heard, scores of other countries. No country in the world has been able so to absorb large numbers of immigrants and profit by them, yet still somehow find a way to remain one nation.

I believe the reason is that we base national identity in America not on common blood or common history or loyalty to a particular ruler but on a shared belief and a set of political ideas and arrangements. We revere the Constitution because it is at the core of who we are. And I would submit for all the troubling responses in the polls that were cited, one of the reasons that we need this Constitution Center is so people will come here and learn the answers to those questions so they will know why they already feel the way they do, because even people who don't know the answers to the questions at bottom are Americans in the sense that I just mentioned, thanks to 213 years of this Constitution.

Since 1993, 5 million immigrants have chosen to become Americans, more than the total of the previous three decades. This week, 25,000 more are being sworn in in ceremonies across our country, celebrating Constitution Week and Citizenship Day. They gain new rights and freely accept new obligations to play their part in the ongoing experiment in self-government that is our Nation.

I say it again, the final clause of the Constitution's preamble reads, "We do ordain and establish this Constitution of the United States." The Founders ordained it when they signed it. The American people have renewed it again and again: in 1789, when we added the Bill of Rights; in the 1860's, when hundreds of thousands gave their lives to ensure that a Union founded in liberty on the proposition that all are created equal would not perish from the Earth in slavery. We renewed it at the coming of the industrial age, recognizing new measures were required to protect and advance equal opportunity and freedom. We renewed it in 1920, when we ratified the 19th amendment, granting women the right to vote.

We renewed it during the great worldwide Depression of the 1930's, when we saved a free economy for free people by building a social safety net and appropriate regulatory protections. We renewed it in the Constitution's finest sense during World War II and the cold war, when we stood up to tyrannies that did not believe people could be trusted with freedom. We renewed in 1963, hearing

and heeding Dr. King's dream that one day the sons of former slaves and former slave-owners would sit down together at the table of brotherhood.

Today, we enter a new era in human affairs, dominated by globalization—which is a fancy way of saying the world is getting smaller and more interconnected—and an explosion in science and information technology, which will change the way we live and work and relate to each other in ways we can only dimly imagine, at a pace that is truly breathtaking.

We, therefore, must renew our commitment to the charters of freedom and apply their values to the challenges of this new era. Our Constitution protects individual integrity and privacy. What does it mean when all of our genetic information is on a little card and in someone's computer? How can we take this magnificent prosperity that the global economy is producing and spread it to everybody? What are our responsibilities to deal with our brothers and sisters half a world away who are still struggling in poverty and under the grip of AIDS, TB, and malaria, which together kill one in every four people who die every year?

What is our responsibility to share our learning in outer space and the deepest oceans with all Americans and with those beyond our borders? How can we be a great nation of free people unless every single child can get a world-class education?

These are only some of the questions the next generation of American leaders will have to contemplate and answer at more and more rapid speeds. But the great thing is, we now have over two centuries of experience to know that we always will need new ideas; we'll always need strong leadership; we'll always need to be open for change. But the Constitution, the Declaration, and the Bill of Rights will always be home base and a good place to return to know what should be the anchor of the changes and the challenges of any new era. That is what this center will give to all Americans.

Finally, let me say, if you read the Declaration of Independence and its commitment to build a more perfect Union, it is easier to understand why the Constitution was constructed as it was. For the Founders, though

in many ways ordinary people, were inordinately wise in the ways of social change and the frailties of human nature. And they knew that the Union would never be perfect but could always be made more perfect.

They knew that we would never fully realize the ideals of the Constitution and the Declaration or the Bill of Rights but that we could always deepen the meaning of freedom, widen the circle of opportunity, and strengthen the bonds of our community. That is what these young immigrants represent today, our future and our steadfast belief that we grow stronger with our diversity in a global world, as long as we reaffirm our common humanity and our common fidelity to the freedom and values of the Constitution.

Now, my fellow Americans, about 4 months from now I will change jobs, and I will be restored to a title that Harry Truman once said was the most important title any American could have, that of citizen. No American citizen in this Republic's history has been more fortunate or more blessed. I hope for the rest of my life I can do a good job with that title. I hope all these young, new citizens behind me will realize that President Truman was right. As important as our Presidents are, as important as our Congresses are, as important as our judges are and our Governors and our mayors, our philanthropists, our artists, our athletes, this country is great because there are good people who get up every day and do their very best to live their dreams and make the most of their own lives and because this country has a system enshrined in the Constitution that gives them the maximum opportunity to do just that.

You should be very proud of what you are doing here today to make sure everyone knows why America is a special place and being an American is a great gift.

I thank you for that. *[Applause]* Thank you.

Now, we're just about done, but I'm going to ask one of our citizens, Susan Yuh, who was born in South Korea, to join me in signing, as everyone else has already done, this steel beam to my right, that will be the founding pillar of a building devoted to our Constitution. I think it's quite fitting that the beam should have the signature of a Presi-

dent, and even more fitting that it should have the signature of a new citizen on her first day as an American.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:17 p.m. on Independence Mall. In his remarks, he referred to Mayor John F. Street and former Mayor Edward G. Rendell of Philadelphia; John C. Bogle, chairman, and Joseph M. Torsella, president and chief executive officer, National Constitution Center; James T. Giles, Chief Judge, U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Pennsylvania; Edward R. Becker III, Chief Judge, U.S. Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit; Marie Rust, Regional Director, Northeast Region, National Park Service; Judith Rodin, president, University of Pennsylvania; and Walter H. Annenberg and his wife, Lee, founders, Annenberg Foundation.

Proclamation 7343—Citizenship Day and Constitution Week, 2000

September 17, 2000

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

In the spring of 1787, George Washington, Benjamin Franklin, Alexander Hamilton, James Madison, and other prominent leaders gathered once again in Philadelphia to offset a looming crisis in the life of our young democracy. The Articles of Confederation, a blueprint for government that they had hammered out in the Second Continental Congress in 1777, had proved too weak and ineffective to achieve a balance of power between the new Federal Government and the States. Rising to this fresh challenge, our founders crafted a new charter of government—the United States Constitution—that has proven to be a masterpiece of political philosophy.

Wise about human nature and wary of unlimited power, the authors of our Constitution created a government where power resides not with one person or institution but with three separate and equal branches of government. It guarantees for our citizens the right and responsibility to choose leaders through free elections, giving Americans the means to enact political change without resorting to violence, insurrection, or revolution. And, with its carefully crafted system

of checks and balances, the Bill of Rights, and its process of amendment, the Constitution maintains an inspired balance between authority and freedom and between the ideals of unity and individual rights.

For more than 200 years the Constitution has provided our Nation with the resilience to survive trying times and the flexibility to correct past injustices. At every turning point in our history, the letter and spirit of the Constitution have enabled us to reaffirm our union and expand the meaning of liberty. Its success can be measured by the millions of people who have left their homelands over the past two centuries to become American citizens. Its influence can be measured by the number and vigor of new democracies springing up across the globe.

In giving us the Constitution, our founders also gave us a powerful example of citizenship. They were deeply involved in governing our Nation and passionately committed to improving our society. The rights we sometimes take for granted today were secured by their courage and by the blood of patriots during the Revolutionary War. As we observe Citizenship Day and Constitution Week, let us remember that with the many gifts bestowed on us by the Constitution comes the responsibility to be informed and engaged citizens; to take an active role in the civic life of our communities and our country; and to uphold the ideals of unity and liberty that have sustained us since our earliest days as a Nation.

In commemoration of the signing of the Constitution and in recognition of the importance of active, responsible citizenship in preserving the Constitution's blessings for our Nation, the Congress, by joint resolution of February 29, 1952 (36 U.S.C. 106), designated September 17 as "Citizenship Day," and by joint resolution of August 2, 1956 (36 U.S.C. 108), requested that the President proclaim the week beginning September 17 and ending September 23 of each year as "Constitution Week."

Now, Therefore, I, William J. Clinton, President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim September 17, 2000, as Citizenship Day and September 17 through September 23, 2000, as Constitution Week. I call upon Federal, State, and local officials,

as well as leaders of civic, educational, and religious organizations, to conduct meaningful ceremonies and programs in our schools, houses of worship, and other community centers to foster a greater understanding and appreciation of the Constitution and the rights and duties of citizenship. I also call on all citizens to rededicate themselves to the principles of the Constitution.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this seventeenth day of September, in the year of our Lord two thousand, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twenty-fifth.

William J. Clinton

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 11:18 a.m., September 18, 2000]

NOTE: This proclamation was published in the *Federal Register* on September 19.

Remarks at a State Dinner Honoring Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee of India

September 17, 2000

And Mr. Prime Minister, on behalf of the American people, let me welcome you again to the White House, along with all your party from India.

I hope that in your time with us, we have at least come close to repaying the warm hospitality with which you and the Indian people greeted me, my family, and our fellow Americans on my visit in March.

One of the most remarkable things to me about our relationship is its scope and its increasing interdependence. There are hundreds of American businesses, foundations, and universities with long commitments to India. When Americans call Microsoft for customer support today, they're as likely to be talking to someone in Bangalore or Hyderabad as to someone in Seattle.

There are more than one million Indians here in America now, and I think more than half of them are here tonight. *[Laughter]* And I might say, Prime Minister, the other half are disappointed that they're not here. *[Laughter]*

Indian-Americans now run more than 750 companies in Silicon Valley alone. In India,

the best information available on maternal health and agriculture can now be downloaded by a growing number of villages with Internet hookups. And Indian-Americans can now get on-line with people across the world who speak Telugu or Gujarati or Bengali.

Americans have fallen in love with Indian novels. I'm told that Prime Minister Vajpayee, when he's not writing Hindi poetry, actually likes to read John Grisham. [Laughter] You might be interested to note, Prime Minister, that he's a distant relative of mine. All the Grishams with money are distant relatives of mine. [Laughter]

And don't forget, whether we're in California or Calcutta, we all want to be a *crorepati*. Now, for the culturally challenged Americans among us, that's from India's version of "Who Wants To Be a Millionaire?" [Laughter]

Of course, our interdependence is about more than commerce and culture. We are also vulnerable to one another's problems, to the shock of economic turmoil, to the plague of infectious diseases, to the spread of deadly military technology, and as we have all too painfully seen, to the terrorists, drug traffickers, and criminals who take advantage of the openness of societies and borders.

The simple lesson of all this to me, Mr. Prime Minister, is that if we're already all in the same boat together, we had better find a way to steer together. We must overcome the fear some people in both our countries sometimes have, for different historical reasons, that if we meet our friends halfway, somehow it will threaten our own independence or uniqueness.

That is why I am so gratified that, with your leadership and the efforts of so many people in this room, we have together built the strongest, most mature partnership India and America have ever known.

We have so very much more to learn from each other. In both our societies, you can find virtually every challenge humanity knows. And in both our societies, you can find virtually every solution to those challenges: confidence in democracy, tolerance for diversity, a willingness to embrace economic and social change.

So it is more than a slogan for Americans to say that India's success will be our success and that together India and America can change the world.

Ladies and gentlemen, I ask you now to join me in a toast to Prime Minister Vajpayee, to the Government and people of India, and the enduring partnership between our two great democracies.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:03 p.m. in a pavilion at the White House. The transcript made available by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee.

Statement on the Reentry Initiative for Ex-Offenders

September 18, 2000

Working together, we have made great strides in reducing crime across the country. The overall crime rate is at its lowest point in 25 years, and America is the safest it has been in a generation. But I believe we can make America even safer for our families. We must continue to confront emerging public safety challenges if we want to keep reducing crime in the 21st century.

One of the key challenges we must address is ex-offenders returning to their families and communities after their release from prison. While the Nation's prison population growth rate has slowed to its lowest level in two decades, more than 1.9 million individuals were incarcerated in State and Federal prisons and local jails in 1999. As a result, an unprecedented number of individuals will be released from prison in the coming years—nearly 600,000 in the next year alone. Moreover, this population poses a serious public safety risk. Studies show that nearly two-thirds of all released offenders will be arrested again within 3 years.

That is why I have proposed a new public safety initiative aimed at providing greater supervision for offenders reentering the community. My fiscal year 2001 budget includes a total of \$145 million for innovative "re-entry" programs to promote responsibility and help keep ex-offenders on track and crime- and drug-free. Through this reentry initiative, the Departments of Justice, Labor,

and Health and Human Services will target resources in high-impact communities for increased law enforcement, drug testing, and treatment, and critical employment, training, and other services to help young ex-offenders work and meet their family responsibilities, including child support. The initiative would fund reentry partnerships between police, correctional agencies, local service providers, and key community organizations like faith-based fatherhood, and victims' groups. Additionally, the initiative would fund reentry courts, based on the drug court model, to provide critical supervision and services for offenders.

Today the administration is taking some important steps to move us forward in this area. The Justice Department is announcing over \$57 million in Residential Substance Abuse Treatment (RSAT) grants to all 50 States to provide substance abuse treatment to offenders in State and local correctional facilities. The Department of Health and Human Services is also releasing child support demonstration grants, including a model approach to improve child support and promote responsible fatherhood among incarcerated fathers in Massachusetts. In addition, the Attorney General and other members of my administration are hosting a roundtable discussion with State and local leaders to spotlight an innovative reentry partnership already underway in the Druid Heights neighborhood in Baltimore, Maryland. Congress could significantly expand and help launch similar efforts across the country by fully funding our reentry initiative. I urge them to do this without delay. If we all do our part, we can build on our progress and strengthen America's communities and families.

Remarks on Signing Federal Long-Term Care Insurance Legislation

September 19, 2000

I should say Joan is, first of all, an amazing person. And her husband and her three children are here. Their son and daughter thanked me for getting them out of school today. *[Laughter]* I just want the Members

of Congress to know there are extended social benefits to these sort of—*[laughter]*.

I want to thank Senators Cleland, Mikulski, and Sarbanes for being here, and Representatives Scarborough, Allen, Davis, Morella, Holmes Norton, Cardin, Moran, and Cummings for coming. All of these Representatives in Congress—I think that's 11—and many more are truly responsible for this happy day, and they worked in a genuine bipartisan spirit to produce this legislation.

I want to thank Janice Lachance and the others at the Office of Personnel Management who worked so hard on it, and the National Association of Retired Federal Employees, the Retired Officers Association, the Treasury employees union, and others.

I'm very honored to be signing this legislation today, so near the end of my service, because the first bill I signed as President was the family and medical leave law. And since then, some—more than 25 million of our fellow citizens have taken time off from work to care for a child or an ill loved one without losing their job. It's made a difference in America. Everywhere I go, somebody comes up and mentions it to me even today.

We come in the same spirit to sign the Long-Term Care Security Act, and over time, this legislation will help more and more families to meet the challenge of caring for our parents and grandparents and others in our families that need long-term care.

Part of the long-term care problem is what I affectionately call a high-class problem. We're living longer. In 1900 the average American couldn't expect to live beyond 50. Today, the average American's life expectancy is 77. Americans who live to be 65 have the highest life expectancy in the world. They can expect to live to be almost 83. Amazing as it sounds, there are currently more than 65,000 living Americans who are at least 100 years old. That's enough to fill the Houston Astrodome and put two teams on the field. *[Laughter]* And if we do it right, before you know it, some of those 100-year-olds will be fit enough to play. *[Laughter]*

Now, these numbers are only going to keep rising as the baby boomers age. By 2030, one out of every five Americans will be 65 or older, and there will be 9 million

people over 85. I hope to be one of them. [Laughter]

We all know there are many joys to aging, but unfortunately, there are also the challenges to our good health, our independence, and sometimes a lifetime of savings. The cost of nursing home care now tops \$50,000 a year, an extraordinary sum few families can afford. Even home care is expensive, as you have just heard, in terms of direct costs, low income, and enormous challenges to family time and parent time.

The legislation I'm about to sign, the Long-Term Care Security Act, will help families plan ahead. It will enable current and former Federal employees, military personnel, and all their families to choose from a menu of quality, long-term care insurance options and purchase their choice at reduced group rates. That means as many as 13 million people will now be able to plan for the future without fear of financial ruin should such care become necessary.

The legislation also will spur more American companies to offer employees the option of affordable high-quality long-term care insurance. I believe that. I believe this will lead into the creation of a market that will benefit people far beyond the reach of the employees and former employees that are covered.

The insurance industry has called this legislation a model for private sector employers, and we thank them for their support, as well. We are also pleased that this groundbreaking legislation has, as it must have had to pass, enjoyed strong bipartisan backing; further proof that not only do Democrats and Republicans both get old, but when we put progress before partisanship, we can tackle our toughest challenges.

Today's signing represents an important step toward meeting the phenomenal demographic changes that we're facing in a humane and decent and, I believe, highly intelligent way. It helps to make sure that the aging of America will be, on balance, a great blessing and not an overwhelming burden to our children and our grandchildren.

Now, as I said, the Long-Term Care Security Act helps many families plan for the future, enabling them to buy good insurance. We believe it will help a lot of families beyond the reach of the law by creating markets

which private sector employers will also be able to take advantage of for their employees. But we know there are millions of people already chronically ill, who can't buy insurance at any price and who do need help right now. That's why I'm so glad that Joan and her family joined us here today.

In homes all across America, 7 million of our fellow citizens are like the Madarases. Seven million are caring for loved ones, primarily elderly loved ones, sometimes children or other close family members who have disabilities. For some, it is a joy, a chance to share memories over a cup of coffee, a chance to share the rhythm and cycles of life. But for others it also includes constant labor or watching the shroud of Alzheimer's transform a soul mate into a stranger, as happened to an uncle and an aunt of mine. These are burdens that people shoulder every day and, as you heard, unapologetically, proudly, loyal to their families, understanding that loving someone for a lifetime means taking the bad along with the good.

But the rest of us ought to lighten their load. And we ought to recognize that these simple, extraordinary sacrifices, rooted in love and loyalty, are also an exceptional boon to society. For whatever their cost to these families, the cost to society is far less than it would be if they had to give up and put their loved ones in institutionalized care.

So if we were to pass our \$3,000 tax credit to provide chronically ill Americans and their families with desperately needed financial relief, it would be, over the long run, less expensive than paying the full cost of institutional care for those who have to give up because the burden becomes too heavy. This \$27 billion initiative eventually could cover up to 60 percent of the cost the families provide—incur—in providing long-term care. But as I said, it's only a small percentage of the cost that would be involved if the families had to give up providing that care.

It's the kind of tax cut our families most need. It will improve the lives of those who need it the most. It will make us a better country because we will fully live up to our professed faith and support for families.

After 5 years of waiting, I hope we can also finally reauthorize the Older Americans Act. It has helped, for more than 35 years,

millions of seniors to lead more independent lives by funding vital, everyday basics like transportation and Meals on Wheels. And I hope we will reauthorize it and strengthen it by funding our caregivers initiative, as well, to provide families with the information, counseling, and support services they need to sustain their selfless missions.

Finally, I hope that we will succeed in passing a voluntary affordable Medicare drug benefit this fall, which also will be a great help to families. Many of the people providing long-term care are doing it for people with extraordinary medicine requirements. Studies show that seniors who lack this kind of coverage are twice as likely to be admitted to nursing homes as those who have it. So again, this is not only the humane and decent thing to do, it's also common sense. It's good for family ties and good for economics.

We have a golden opportunity, as so many of our fellow citizens move into their golden years, to meet the challenges of the aging of America. We have never had a better opportunity to do it, because of our prosperity and our surplus. So I hope that we will continue to build on the spirit embodied in this bill today.

The Long-Term Care Security Act is worth celebrating. It is worth celebrating for what it does, for the indirect benefits it will have for people who are not covered by it but whose employers will be able to get this kind of group insurance, and for what it says about our values and what we can do in the future. I hope that we'll take every opportunity to build on it.

And now I'd like to ask all the folks on the stage with me to gather round, and I'll sign the bill.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11 a.m. in Presidential Hall in the Dwight D. Eisenhower Executive Office Building. In his remarks, he referred to Joan Madarases, mother of three, who cares for two disabled family members. Ms. Madarases introduced the President. H.R. 4040, approved September 19, was assigned Public Law No. 106–265. The Long-Term Care Security Act is Title I of Public Law No. 106–265.

Statement on Signing Federal Long-Term Care Insurance Legislation

September 19, 2000

Today I am pleased to sign into law H.R. 4040, the “Long-Term Care Security Act.” It includes two titles—the “Long-Term Care Security Act” and the “Federal Erroneous Retirement Coverage Corrections Act.” This bill authorizes the creation of a new program of group long-term care insurance for Federal employees and annuitants, active and retired members of the uniformed services, employees and annuitants of the U.S. Postal Service and the Tennessee Valley Authority, and relatives of these individuals. It also provides for a more equitable way to correct certain retirement coverage errors affecting thousands of Federal employees and their families.

Addressing the needs of an aging society has been one of my highest priorities. The retirement of the baby boom generation will have profound effects not only on Medicare and Social Security but on long-term care. Millions more seniors will need care from home and community-based providers, nursing homes, and families. Yet, today's system is a patchwork that often does not serve the needs of people with chronic illnesses. To address this, I announced a multi-pronged long-term care initiative in early 1999. It tackles the complex problem of long-term care through: (1) creating a \$3,000 tax credit to help people with long-term care needs or the families who care for them; (2) providing funding for services that support family caregivers of older persons; (3) improving equity in Medicaid eligibility for people in home- and community-based settings; (4) encouraging partnerships between low-income housing for the elderly and Medicaid; and (5) encouraging the purchase of quality private long-term care insurance by Federal employees. H.R. 4040, which is bipartisan, consensus legislation, implements the portion of the initiative concerning long-term care insurance for Federal employees.

It will improve the availability and quality of private long-term care insurance by allowing, for the first time, families of Federal employees to access a high-quality, affordable long-term care insurance option through the

Office of Personnel Management (OPM). The OPM will contract for benefits with one or more private contractors, enabling the agency to obtain the best value for the entire Federal family. The OPM will ensure that policies have important consumer protections that are generally not available in individual insurance policies, such as full portability, and that enrollees will have the option to purchase policies that include inflation and non-forfeiture protections. By using the size of the Federal workforce family—about 13 million people—as leverage, the Federal Government will be able to provide long-term care insurance at group rates expected to be 15 to 20 percent lower than individual rates. Coverage will be provided for a range of services, including personal care, home health care, adult day care, and nursing home care.

Our hope is that, by making high-quality private long-term care coverage available to the Federal family at negotiated group rates, we will continue to serve as a model to other employers across the Nation. This policy is also the most responsible next step in promoting private long-term care insurance. Building on the financial incentives I signed into law in 1996, this policy will increase both the number of people with long-term care coverage and the quality of such coverage—increasing confidence in this growing market as people start planning for their own future long-term care needs.

The bill also provides a comprehensive solution to the problems faced by many Federal employees and their families who, through no fault of their own, are affected by retirement coverage errors. Unlike current law, which directs how coverage errors will be corrected, it permits those placed in the wrong retirement coverage to choose the coverage that best serves their needs and preferences. This new authority to correct erroneous retirement enrollments and the new long-term care insurance program will greatly enhance the quality of life for Federal employees and members of the Armed Forces. I applaud the bipartisan congressional coalition and OPM Director Lachance for their yeoman efforts in developing and passing this important bill.

In approving H.R. 4040, I note that section 1002 of the bill (new section 9003(d)(3) of title 5, U.S. Code) provides that “the President (or his designee) shall submit to [specified congressional committees] a written recommendation as to whether the program . . . should be continued without modification, terminated, or restructured.” The Recommendations Clause of the Constitution provides that the President “shall from time to time . . . recommend to [Congress] . . . such Measures as he shall judge necessary and expedient.” That Clause protects the President’s authority to formulate and present his own recommendations, which includes the power to decline to offer any recommendation. Accordingly, to avoid any infringement on the President’s constitutionally protected policy-making prerogatives, I shall construe this provision not to extend to the submission of recommendations that the President finds it unnecessary or inexpedient to present.

It gives me great pleasure to sign H.R. 4040 into law. I welcome the opportunity to offer Federal employees, members of the Armed Forces, and their families, this additional option to care for their aging parents, and let their children care for them with dignity and financial security. I look forward to working with the Congress to pass the other critical elements of my plan to improve long-term care for all Americans.

William J. Clinton

The White House,
September 19, 2000.

NOTE: H.R. 4040, approved September 19, was assigned Public Law No. 106–265.

Remarks at a Luncheon for Gubernatorial Candidate

Heidi Heitkamp

September 19, 2000

Thank you. You know, I have a lot of interest in this race. Heidi was attorney general; I was attorney general. And I was Governor for a dozen years. It’s a wonderful job. It really matters whether we have a few more Democratic Governors. This year more than ever, I think women should be elected to

public office. *[Laughter]* But the main thing I want to say is, you've got Dorgan, Conrad, and Pomeroy. And you all know how strong I've been for diversity. I just want anyone who doesn't look like a spy during the cold war—*[laughter]*—representing North Dakota. *[Laughter]*

I'm convinced that sometime years ago when the Republicans were winning all the races, these brilliant guys made a pact and said, "Listen, guys, if we all have short hair, if we're thin, if we wear glasses, we ain't going to scare nobody, and we can do whatever we want to do." *[Laughter]* And look, what can I say? It worked. I never carried North Dakota. *[Laughter]* It was great, but I think they're really stepping out here. *[Laughter]* I mean, they're really stepping out.

Now, I'll be brief and serious. The two things should always go together. One of the greatest things about this country is its genuine diversity, going beyond even race and religion and all the other things we talk about in Washington, to the way people make a living off the land, the way they organize themselves in their communities, the difference in what it's like to live in a place like North Dakota where Heidi can invite you all to come and mean it, and it's so big we could all be missed if we showed up, and a place where nobody's got any elbow room.

And the genius of our system is that if we all do our part, the country works better. Central to that is what happens in all these States. And North Dakota, too, is growing more diverse and more faced with the challenges of the 21st century. And I can just tell you I have an enormous amount of respect for Heidi Heitkamp, and I know how important it is that we have good Governors.

I'll give you just one example. I could give you 20, but after she scared me by saying I talked an hour and a half in North Dakota, I'm not going to do that. *[Laughter]* I started to bring a cup of coffee up here, too, and I couldn't. *[Laughter]* But anyway, I'll give you one example. We passed in the balanced budget bill in 1997, with a bipartisan vote in both Houses, big majorities, the largest expansion in federally funded health care for children since Medicaid, the Children's Health Insurance Program. And we knew

that the number and circumstances of the children were different from State to State. So we reached a bipartisan agreement that instead of just expanding Medicaid, we would allow the States to build and design these programs and enroll the children.

Now, there's enough money in that program to enroll 5 million kids. And if the program really identified all the people who were eligible, it would also picked up another 2 million or 3 million kids who could be served by Medicaid. There is a drastic difference in how well the different States have done in identifying and enrolling their children. It matters who the Governor is in a State.

I'll give you another example. Under the leadership of Secretary Riley over the last 7 years, we have cut Federal regulations on States and local school districts by two-thirds, but we have increased the focus of Federal spending on certain standards, so that for example, all the schools—all the States that get Federal funds have to have some standards, have to identify failing schools, and have to have strategies to try to turn them around. As some of you know, I've tried to get Federal funding tied a little tighter, to say you've got to turn them around, shut them down, or give the kids some other alternative. But already, we have required them to identify failing schools.

Now, some States have said, "So what?" Some school districts have said, "So what?" But I was in an elementary school in western Kentucky the other day, that was one of their failing schools 3 years ago that's now one of the 20 best schools in the State. Lots of poor kids, lots of problems—it worked.

I was in a school in Harlem the other day, to take a totally different culture, that 2 years ago had 80 percent of the kids reading and doing math below grade level, elementary school. Today, 76 percent are reading and doing math at or above grade level—in 2 years.

Now, if you do it on a—one of the biggest problems with education reform is that no one has ever done it systematically. Every problem in American education has been solved by somebody somewhere. Places like North Dakota have generally done very well because they have time and space enough

to give everybody the personal attention they needed. But they will have a lot of these challenges, too. And I'm telling you, it really matters who is Governor. No one has ever succeeded in systematically doing what teachers and principals do every day in the most difficult circumstances, creating miracles all over this country. It's never been done in any State in a systematic way, but some have done much better than others. It matters who the Governor is.

And those are only two examples. It matters economically. It matters in terms of the social services. It matters in terms of how the elderly are treated, and especially those that get nursing home care. And what about the people who are going to be living in boarding homes, and what about the people that are going to be—you're going to see the most unbelievable explosion of living options for elderly and disabled people, as we are able to keep more disabled people alive and functioning and doing well, and more elderly people live longer, that you can imagine.

And a lot of it—I don't care what we do at the national level and who's the President and what the Congress does; it will matter who the Governor is. I just—the first time I ever met her, I thought she was great. I wanted to take her home to meet Hillary and keep her there for a couple weeks. And she had other obligations. [*Laughter*] She is an extraordinary woman. You did a good thing coming here and giving her money today. And if we all keep doing it, I think she'll win in November.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:30 p.m. in the Crystal Ballroom at the St. Regis Hotel. State Attorney General Heidi Heitkamp is a candidate for Governor of North Dakota.

Remarks on Senate Passage of Permanent Normal Trade Relations With China and an Exchange With Reporters

September 19, 2000

The President. Good afternoon. Today the Senate voted to pave the way for permanent normal trade relations between the United States and China. This landmark

agreement will extend economic prosperity at home and promote economic freedom in China, increasing the prospects for openness in China and a more peaceful future for all of us.

When we open markets abroad to U.S. goods, we open opportunities at home. This vote will do that. In return for normal trade relations—the same terms of trade we offer now to more than 130 other countries—China will open its markets to American products from wheat to cars to consulting services. And we will be far more able to sell goods in China without moving our factories there.

But there is much more at stake here than our economic self-interests. It's about building a world in which more human beings have more freedom, more control over their lives, more contact with others than ever before, a world in which countries are tied more closely together, and the prospects for peace are strengthened.

Trade alone won't create this kind of world, but bringing China under global rules of trade is a step in the right direction. The more China opens its markets to our products, the wider it opens its doors to economic freedom and the more fully it will liberate the potential of its people.

When China finishes its negotiations and joins the WTO, our high-tech companies will help to speed the information revolution there. Outside competition will speed the demise of China's huge state industries and spur the enterprise of private sector involvement.

They will diminish the role of government in people's daily lives. It will strengthen those within China who fight for higher labor standards, a cleaner environment, for human rights, and the rule of law.

And we will find, I believe, that America has more influence in China with an outstretched hand than with a clenched fist. Of course, none of us should think for a moment that any of these outcomes are guaranteed. The advance of freedom ultimately will depend upon what people in China are willing to do to continue standing up for change. We will continue to help support them.

Peace and security in Asia will depend upon our military presence, our alliances, on

stopping the spread of deadly weapons. So we will continue to be a force for peace, and we will not rest in our efforts to make sure that freer trade also is fairer trade.

These are some of the most important issues that our Nation faces. That's why this vote was so important and, for many, so difficult. I want to thank Senator Lott and Senator Daschle, Senator Roth, Senator Moynihan, and Senator Baucus, as well as those who led our effort in the House, and everyone within this administration who worked so hard to achieve this important milestone.

But I also want to acknowledge those who raised important questions about this policy and say to you, this is not the end of the story; it is the beginning. We have a chance, not a certainty but a chance, to strengthen our prosperity and our security and to see China become a more open society. Now our test as a nation is whether we can achieve that. I hope, and I strongly believe, that we will.

Thank you very much.

Middle East Peace Process

Q. Mr. President, what's your understanding of what's going on in the Middle East? Prime Minister Barak announced a suspension of talks. Now, he says he'll resume tomorrow. What's going on there, sir?

The President. They're down to the difficult issues, and they're both feeling the pressure of these hard issues and the press of time. I don't think it's more complicated than that, and I think you should expect, from time to time, both sides to express some exasperation. And as long as they get back to the work, you should feel positive about it.

Q. Are you, sir, exasperated by the process itself?

The President. No. I always thought it was going to be hard. And they're down to the difficult—there are no easy decisions now, so we've just got to keep working at it and try to finish.

Permanent Normal Trade Relations With China

Q. Now that they have the trade bill, sir, what incentive will China have to listen to

our concerns about human rights and weapons proliferation?

The President. Well, first of all, on the proliferation front, let me point out that we've made a lot of progress. China signed the Chemical Weapons Convention, the Biological Weapons Convention, the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty, the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty. And they work with us to stop transfers that we thought were destructive on more than one occasion.

Are there still problems? Yes, there are. I think that the incentive they will have is that more and more countries will want to become more and more involved with them as long as they feel that they're becoming more responsible members of the international community. And also, they'll have other ways to earn money over the long run that are responsible, legal, and actually socially beneficial. And I also believe that they have shown in other ways that they would like to be partners in the international system and assume a leadership role that is constructive. All of this will be possible if there is a common course on nonproliferation. Furthermore, I think that all big countries will come to see that their own personal interests are more advanced by nonproliferation than by having various entities within the country make a quick buck through proliferation. It's not good politics, and it's certainly not good for national security.

Downed Cuban Aircraft

Q. Mr. President, have you followed the situation of this downed aircraft just off of Cuba, and what can you tell us about that situation, sir?

The President. I don't know that I can say any more than I have seen on the breaking news. I have clearly—I've been briefed, and we know about what's been on the news reports. Let me say this. I can imagine that there will be a lot of questions about what should be done about the people that are found alive. I think the most important thing now is just to worry about their care: How badly are they hurt; what kind of medical care do they need; How quickly can we get it to them? To me, that's the overwhelming question, and I think other facts will emerge

as the day goes on, and we'll probably know a lot more about it tomorrow.

Strategic Petroleum Reserve

Q. How close are you, sir, to making a decision on tapping the Strategic Petroleum Reserve, and what sort of time constraints do you have to work with, given the fact that winter's coming?

The President. Well, first I want to—I really do want to see what is the considered market judgment about the recent OPEC move, and I don't think we've seen it yet. It's been sort of complicated by speculations about Iraq, about speculations about what the refinery capacity is, and some uncertainty, still, about how much oil is on the seas now based on production.

So I'm studying this very closely. I've talked to a lot of people about it; I will continue to do that. But we have some time before it will be too late to affect the supplies and availability of all the products we'll need as the cold weather sets in. I just think we need a few more days to see what the real market impact of the OPEC decision is. And as all of you know—you've read all the stories and analyses about what the decision might or might not mean, and I just want to see what the lay of the land is, and then I'll make the best judgment I can.

Q. Would mid-October be too late?

Independent Counsel's Report

Q. Mr. President, there's word that Independent Counsel Ray will release a statement tomorrow about his findings on Whitewater, including the role of your wife. Six weeks away from the election, do you question the timing?

The President. Well, you know, even Mr. Starr said almost 2 years ago that there was nothing to any of that stuff that's just been coming out now, a year and a half later. So I think people are capable of drawing their own conclusions about that. I don't think I can serve much of the public interest by commenting on it. I think it's pretty obvious.

We had a report from a truly independent source in 1996, saying that nothing wrong was done and that Hillary's billing records fully supported her account—1996. So nothing has changed in this thing in the last few

years, and I think people will just be able to draw their own conclusions.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:42 p.m. in the James S. Brady Briefing Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Prime Minister Ehud Barak of Israel and former Independent Counsel Kenneth Starr. A reporter referred to current Independent Counsel Robert W. Ray.

Statement on the Need for Congressional Action on a National Blood Alcohol Content Standard To Combat Drunk Driving

September 19, 2000

A new study released today by Transportation Secretary Rodney Slater underscores the need for Congress to act swiftly to strengthen protections against drunk driving.

The study by the U.S. Department of Transportation's National Highway Transportation Safety Administration makes clear that crucial driving skills are seriously impaired when an individual's blood alcohol content (BAC) reaches .08. Simply put, this study lends further proof that at .08, a person is too impaired to safely get behind the wheel. To help stem drunk driving and other safety hazards, the Department is releasing nearly \$44 million in highway safety grants to 38 States and the District of Columbia. These grants will provide important incentives for States to save lives through tough programs and penalties to reduce drunk driving and increase seat belt use.

But we must do more to make our streets and highways safer. In the Transportation Appropriations conference report, Congress has the opportunity right now to save an estimated 500 lives a year by setting a nationwide standard of .08 BAC. The Senate courageously passed this lifesaving measure in June, thanks to the leadership of Senators Lautenberg and Shelby. I urge the Congress to send me a final bill that helps make .08 BAC the law of the land without further delay.

**Message to the Congress
Transmitting a Report on
Telecommunications Payments
to Cuba**

September 19, 2000

To the Congress of the United States:

As required by section 1705(e)(6) of the Cuban Democracy Act of 1992, 22 U.S.C. 6004(e)(6), as amended by section 102(g) of the Cuban Liberty and Democratic Solidarity (LIBERTAD) Act of 1996, Public Law 104–114, 110 Stat. 785, I transmit herewith a semiannual report detailing payments made to Cuba as a result of the provision of telecommunications services pursuant to Department of the Treasury specific licenses.

William J. Clinton

The White House,
September 19, 2000.

**Remarks at the Debut of “Speak
Truth To Power: Voices From
Beyond the Darkness”**

September 19, 2000

Thank you very much. President Arias, first let me thank you for your presence here tonight and your remarkable leadership.

And Kerry, I want to join this great throng in telling you how grateful we are that you have undertaken this project with such passion and commitment. I know that in spite of the fact that half the seats tonight are filled by your family—[laughter]—there are a lot of people here who feel just as strongly about you as Andrew and Ethel and your mother-in-law, Matilda, and Senator Kennedy and the others who are here. You are an astonishing person, and we thank you for amplifying the voices of the human rights defenders who have honored us by their presence here tonight.

These men and women have carried on against unimaginable obstacles, knowing the truth once spoken can never be completely erased, that hope, once sparked, can never be fully extinguished. They have seen injustice aided by apathy. In spite of all the nice things you said about me tonight, a full half dozen of them were prodding me along to-

night before I came out here to do even better, and I like that a lot. They have carried on knowing that even a single act of courage can be contagious, and their courage, and that of so many others around the world, has indeed proved contagious.

More people live in freedom today than at any time in human history, and in 1999 more people around the world won the right to vote and choose their leaders than was in even the case in 1989, the year the Berlin Wall fell. From Bosnia to Croatia to Kosovo, we are no longer struggling to stop crimes against humanity but, instead, working steadily to bring perpetrators to justice and to create the conditions of humane living. From South Africa to Chile, people are confronting the injustices of the past so that their children will not have to relive them. And all over the world, people finally are recognizing, as Hillary said in Beijing, that women’s rights are human rights.

Yet for all the brave work that is captured in this magnificent book and that will be honored tonight, freedom’s struggle is far from over. And I think it is appropriate tonight that we all ask ourselves at this magic moment of prosperity and peace for our country, what are our responsibilities to advance the struggle? How can we use this global age to serve human rights, not to undermine them?

Globalization is not just about economics. It has given us a global human rights movement, as well. Whether activists are fighting for press freedom in Ivory Coast or the rights of children in America, they can talk to each other, learn from each other, and know they are not alone. Indeed, maybe the most important lesson of this evening is to say to all of them, whom we honor, you are not alone.

Global economic integration can, if done right, make it harder for governments to control people’s lives in the wrong way. Information technology can be one of the most liberating forces humanity has ever known.

Twenty years ago it was a great victory if we could smuggle a handful of mimeograph machines to dissidents in Poland or Russia. When I went to the Soviet Union 30 years ago, young people would come up to me on the street and try to figure out if there was some way I could smuggle a book back in to them. Now, hardly a government on

Earth, in spite of all their best efforts, can stop their much more technologically wise young people from using the Internet to get knowledge from halfway around the world.

But for freedom to prevail, we need to do more than open markets, hook up the world to CNN, and hope dictators are driven out by dot-coms. Real change still depends upon real people, on brave men and women willing to fight for good causes when the chance of success is low and the danger of persecution is great—men and women like those we honor tonight. Globalization on the whole, I think, will prove to be a very good thing, but it is not a human rights policy. To advance freedom and justice, we have to support and defend their champions.

Today, the defenders of human rights need our support in Serbia, where the democratic opposition is stronger than ever, heading into critical elections this weekend. Mr. Milosevic has stepped up his repression. Surely, he is capable of stealing the election. But if he does, we must make sure, all of us, not just the Americans and certainly not just the American Government, that he loses what legitimacy he has left in the world, and the forces of change will grow even stronger. We must keep going until the people of Serbia can live normal lives and their country can come back home to Europe.

The defenders of human rights need our support in Burma, as well. Their only weapons are words, reason, and the brave example of Aung San Suu Kyi. But these are fearful weapons to the ruling regime. So last week they confined her again, hoping the world would not hear or speak out. But voices were raised, and her struggle continues.

Those who rule Burma should know, from this place tonight, with all these people we honor, all of us will watch carefully what happens, and you can only regain your place in the world when you regain the trust of your people and respect their chosen leaders.

In these and so many other places, those who fight for human rights deserve our support and our absolute conviction that their efforts will not be in vain. All human rights defenders are told in the beginning they are naive; they are not making a difference; they are wasting their time. Some have even been

cruelly told they are advancing some sort of Western cultural notions of freedom that have no place in their country. They are all laughed at, until one day their causes triumph and everyone calls them heroes.

The same has been said of almost every human rights policy our Nation has pursued in the past. Kerry talked about East Timor. A few years ago, how many people would have predicted it could become independent? A dozen years ago, how many people believed the Baltic States would be free? But all those people who came out for Captive Nations Week, year-in and year-out, and were literally ridiculed in the sixties and seventies, would be right, and all the hard-headed realists would be wrong.

The men and women we honor never gave in to repression, fatigue, to cynicism, or to realism which justifies the unacceptable. And neither should America.

Hina Jilani, who has worked for women and human rights in Pakistan and is with us tonight, said, "I never have a sense of futility because what we do is worth doing." If you believe that every person matters, that every person has a story and a voice that deserves to be heard, then you must believe that what all human rights defenders do everywhere is worth doing.

Let us never develop a sense of futility, for the people we honor tonight have proved the wisdom of Martin Luther King's timeless adage, that the arc of history is long, but it bends toward justice.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:28 p.m. in the Eisenhower Theater at the John F. Kennedy Center for Performing Arts. In his remarks, he referred to former President Oscar Arias of Costa Rica, founder, Arias Foundation for Peace and Human Progress; Kerry Kennedy Cuomo, author on whose work the play was based, her mother-in-law, Matilda Cuomo, husband, Secretary of Housing and Urban Development Andrew M. Cuomo, and mother, Ethel Kennedy; President Slobodan Milosevic of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro); and Aung San Suu Kyi, 1999 Nobel Peace Prize recipient.

Remarks to the National Hispanic Foundation for the Arts

September 19, 2000

Well, first of all, let me say thank you for the welcome. I thank the members of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus who are here and other Members of Congress and the people from our administration who are here. I want to thank Jimmy Smits and Felix Sanchez. And I want to congratulate your honorees, Sara Martinez Tucker and the Hispanic Scholarship Fund for 25 years of service. I want to say a special word of appreciation to all the Latinos who have been part of our administration, including Maria Echaveste, Mickey Ibarra, Brian Barretto, Aida Alvarez, Bill Richardson, and all the others.

Let me say, I'm sorry I'm not in proper attire tonight. *[Laughter]* But Jimmy Smits called me this afternoon, and I only had two other things I was supposed to do, and so he said I had to show. *[Laughter]* And I want you to know I am here in spite of the fact that Jimmy Smits called me. *[Laughter]* And I'll tell you why. If I have to hear Hillary say one more time, "That is the best looking man I have ever seen," I think I will die.

So, right before I was here, I went over to the Kennedy Center. And there's a magnificent event at the Kennedy Center that Kerry Kennedy Cuomo is having about her book on human rights activists, and artists from all over our country and human rights heroes from all over the world are over there tonight. And so, I went from there to a book party for my friend Paul Begala. And I'm on my way over here, and everybody wanted to know where I was going. And this NBC television reporter said, "Jimmy Smits, that's the best looking man I ever saw in my life." *[Laughter]*

So, I said, "Well, what can I tell you? I've been to war for 8 years now, and I don't look very good anymore." *[Laughter]* He will never forgive me for embarrassing him like that. *[Laughter]*

I want to say something seriously. Felix, I appreciate what you have done so much with this foundation. And I want to say, I made fun of Jimmy Smits tonight, but I want you to know that becoming a friend of his

has been one of the real joys of being President. He has been so kind to my wife and to me, to our family. He's been to the White House many times, and he's always been there for a good cause. And I hope you'll forgive me for pulling your leg tonight, Jimmy, but I'll never forget you for being our friend. Thank you very much.

I want to thank the National Hispanic Foundation for the Arts for giving young people a chance. From the silver screen to the Broadway stage, kids with talent and dreams need a chance. That's what we've tried to do for 8 years now for all America's children. And the Vice President and I owe those of you who have done so much to help us do that a profound debt of gratitude, and I thank you.

Tonight I came mostly just to do that, just to say thank you, for all you do for the arts, for all you do for the Hispanic community, and for all you've done to help America move forward in the last 8 years. We now have the lowest Hispanic unemployment rate we've ever recorded, the lowest Hispanic poverty rate in a generation, a million new homeowners in the last 6 years. The earned-income tax credit has been doubled, and it's lifted over a million Hispanics out of poverty. The minimum wage helped 1.6 million Hispanic workers, and it's time to raise it again and help more.

The Hispanic Education Action Plan to encourage Hispanic youth to stay in school and go to college, along with our scholarship initiatives and other things, have contributed to the fact that the college-going rate among Hispanic young people is up over 50 percent in the last 7 years. And—listen to this—a report which was issued last week said there has been a 500 percent increase in the number of Hispanic students taking advance placement courses in high school to prepare for college.

Under the Vice President's leadership, we've reduced the naturalization backlog at INS. And under Aida Alvarez's leadership, loans to Hispanic entrepreneurs by the SBA have increased by 250 percent.

We have all been enriched by your work. And I know that because of your work, we'll have more great singers, more great writers, more great actors and actresses. I know we've

got a long way to go, too, because still Latino characters are only about 3 percent of those that appear on prime-time television. I just left Rita Moreno, and I told her that I enjoyed watching her as a nun on her television series. [Laughter] And we were laughing about it. And I think that you will see, if you keep working, though, more and more of our movies and our television shows and our Broadway shows reflecting the rich diversity of America.

And that's the last point I want to make. I have said on many occasions, and I'll just say one more time tonight, that if I could have only one wish for America, believe it or not, it would not be for a continued unbroken economic prosperity. It would be that somehow we would find the wisdom to live together as brothers and sisters, to truly be one America across all the lines that divide us.

And to—just sort of a little picture of how fast America has changed; you may see the advertisements today for—they're on television now—for Denzel Washington's new movie about the integration of T.C. Williams High School over in Alexandria, Virginia, and its football team, which occurred—what—almost 40 years ago, not such a long time ago once you've reached my age, anyway. [Laughter] Now, a little over three decades later, that high school is in a school district which has students from over 180 different racial and ethnic groups, parents speaking over 100 different native languages. It's the most diverse school district in America.

And I think it's sort of fitting that this movie, coming out in the new millennium, talks about something that to most of these kids is ancient history, that we hope they'll never forget. But it's sobering to look at the profile of them and realize that they are both the great opportunity and the great challenge of the future: Can we figure out a way to give them all a world-class education, with all their diversity? Can we figure out a way to make sure that every single child, every family, every faith in America is profoundly proud of its roots, understands them, and yet believes deep in the core of being that our common humanity is even more important than our unique characteristics? These are very big questions.

Not so long ago, a number of you in this room came to the White House for a showing of "*Mi Familia*," the movie. Remember, you saw it; you were there. And so I was thinking about that tonight and feeling sort of nostalgic. And I think the central question that all of us have to ask ourselves, both within and beyond our borders now, is who is in our family anyway?

There is an astonishing new book out, been out a few months, by a man named Robert Wright, called "*Non Zero*," kind of a weird title unless you're familiar with game theory. But in game theory, a zero-sum game is one where, in order for one person to win, somebody has to lose. A non-zero-sum game is a game in which you can win, and the person you're playing with can win, as well. And the argument of the book is that, notwithstanding all the terrible things that happened in the 20th century—the abuses of science by the Nazis, the abuses of organization by the Communists, all the things that continue to be done in the name of religious or political purity—essentially, as societies grow more and more connected, and we become more interdependent, one with the other, we are forced to find more and more non-zero-sum solutions. That is, ways in which we can all win.

And that's basically the message I've been trying to preach for 8 years here, that everybody counts; everybody deserves a chance; we all do better when we help each other. We have to have an expanding idea of who is in our family. And we in the United States, because we're so blessed, have particular responsibilities to people not only within our borders who have been left behind but beyond our borders who otherwise will never catch up if we don't do our part, because we are all part of the same human family and because, actually, life is more and more a non-zero-sum game, so that the better they do, the better we'll do.

Now, I believe, because of the history and culture, because of the pain and the promise of the Hispanic community in the United States, you are uniquely qualified to make sure America learns this lesson now.

And so that's the last thing I'd like to say from the heart. You have made being President this last 8 years a joy. It has been an

honor for me to work with so many of you. If our country is better off because of anything I did, I am grateful. But all the best stuff is still out there if we can learn to preserve what is special about us and our clan, our tribe, and our faith, and do it while affirming our common humanity. Do that for America, and the best is still out there.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:50 p.m. at the Renaissance Mayflower Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to actor Jimmy Smits; Felix Sanchez, president and founder, National Hispanic Foundation for the Arts; Sara Martinez Tucker, president and chief executive officer, National Hispanic Scholarship Fund; and actress Rita Moreno. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Remarks to the Church of God in Christ Bishops Convention

September 20, 2000

The President. Thank you. Well, if I had any sense at all, I would quit while I'm ahead. [Laughter] I know I'm not running for anything this year; otherwise, I would never agree to speak behind all those folks. [Laughter]. Bishop Owens and Bishop Smith and Bishop Brooks, Bishop Haynes. Let me say hello to Bishop Clark, the General Board of Bishops. I thank the choir. I was pretty transported during all that, weren't you?

Audience members. Yes, sir.

The President. If I could sing like that lady, I'd have been in a different line of work. [Laughter]

I want to say a special word of thanks to Bishop Walker, who has been my friend for so many years, and his colleague in Arkansas, Bishop Lindsey. I hope the Lord won't think it's sacrilegious, but in a figurative way, they helped raise me from the political dead 18 years ago. Otherwise, I wouldn't be here today. And I thank them for that.

I also want to say how grateful I am to those in our administration who have helped me to work with you—Ben Johnson, who is here. You mentioned Alvin Brown, representing the Vice President. He also represented all those empowerment zones, where we've created jobs for people who

have been left out and left behind. The Vice President and I thank him for that.

And I, too, want to pay special privilege to the man, Bishop Owens, who was where you are now when I started. Bishop Ford—I loved him. He was my friend, and I'm honored to see you, sir.

In Timothy, it is written that, "If a man desire the office of a bishop, he desireth a good work." Now, I thought I would come here and talk about that, because unlike me, you aren't term-limited—[laughter]—except, of course, in the sense that we are all term-limited.

And so as we pass through this fleeting life, I wanted most of all to thank you for your good work. I want to thank you for your friendship to me and to Hillary and to Chelsea, for sticking with our family through thick and thin, and for being a part of America's family as we have moved forward.

It seems hard to believe it's been almost 10 years since I spoke to about 20,000 members of the Church of God in Christ in Memphis, at the convention. Then, Bishop Owens and I were reminiscing. I went back to Memphis, to the Mason Temple in 1993, to speak where Dr. King delivered his last sermon. And as he pointed out, some people thought it was my best sermon as President. [Laughter] In 1996 I addressed the Women's Convention in New Orleans.

We've had a wonderful relationship, a friendship, a partnership. And much of what has been said today has been deeply personal, and for that I am grateful. But I think it's worth remembering that you do your jobs, and I have done mine, not primarily for the personal but for the others, that we are supposed to be serving. And if we take a hit now and again along the way, that's just part of the cost of service.

And the Scripture says we should simply not grow weary; that in due season, we shall reap. I have to admit, there were times when I thought the winters were too long, and I thought we'd never get to the reaping part. [Laughter]

But we have. We have the longest economic expansion in our history, and we've all been a part of it. We have the lowest welfare rolls in 30 years, the lowest violent crime

in 27 years, the lowest African-American unemployment ever recorded, the lowest poverty rate among African-Americans ever recorded, the highest homeownership and business ownership among minorities in America ever recorded.

The teen birth rate is at the lowest level ever recorded. For the first time in history, African-American children graduate from high school at the same rate as the white majority. We saw a report just a few days ago saying that the last couple of years the percentage of African-American children taking advanced placement courses in high school—which means they're going to college; otherwise, there's no point in going through all that grief—has increased by 300 percent in just the last 3 years.

And I do think a little of the venom is draining out of our national life. You know, there are people that try to start up and get everybody mad, but it's not getting a lot of traction this year. I saw, just the other day, the Church Arson Task Force said that church arsons today were less than half what they were 4 years ago. Maybe the American people are coming home to their better natures. I think they are. I hope they are.

And I guess that's the most important thing I want to say. I'm grateful that we've been able to make this progress, and I'm grateful that you believe I kept my commitments to you. I certainly tried to. But after all, we are all just passing through. If you serve 4 years or 8 years as President, or 4 years or 40 years as Bishop, we're all just passing through. And we add our little bit to humanity's work, and then we go on.

Now, what I want you to think about now is, what have we done all this work together for in the last 8 years? What have we fought all these fights for in the last 8 years? What do we intend to do with this great unusual moment of peace and prosperity?

When I came to you 10 years ago—I said this at the Congressional Black Caucus the other night, and I got a laugh, and I think some people thought I was being a bit irreverent, but I wasn't—I said, "You know, people took a chance on me in 1992. I can just imagine all those people going in the polling place and saying, 'Do I want to vote for this kid? He looks so young.'" I didn't have any

gray hair then. [Laughter] " 'And his opponent refers to him as the Governor of a small southern State. I can't even find that place on the map. Should I do this?' " I just hear all those conversations. And I said, "Look, give me a break. It wasn't that big a chance because the country was in the ditch, and we needed a change, right?" We needed a change. [Laughter]

But now we're doing well, and we have a lot of self-confidence, and there are a few little storm clouds on the horizon at home and abroad. But people basically know that we're moving in the right direction, and we're doing it together. So now we have a decision to make in the absence of that kind of pressure we felt in '92.

Audience member. Al Gore.

The President. Yes, I'm getting to that. [Laughter]

But it's not that easy. Why? There's an African proverb which says, "Smooth seas do not make skillful sailors." Sometimes it's harder to make a good decision in good times than bad times. Everybody in this room who's over 30 years old has made at least one big mistake in your life, not because times were so tough at the moment but because they were so good, you thought there was no penalty to the failure to concentrate. Is that right? Isn't that right?

Audience member. You're right. You're right.

The President. If you live long enough, you'll make a mistake like that. Is that right?

Audience member. Preach, Mr. President!

The President. Okay, that's where we are now. That's where we are.

Now, here's what we could do with this good fortune. If we wanted to, over the next 10 years, we could get rid of child poverty—if we wanted to. We could give all our kids a world-class education. How do I know that? Well, I just told you some of the statistics.

The reason is, we now figured out what works: small classes, well-trained teachers, preschool, after-school programs, high standards; you turn around failing schools or put them under new management. Let me just give—I was in Harlem the other day in a school, elementary school. Two years ago—2 years ago—80 percent of the children were

doing reading and math below grade level. Two years later, today, 74 percent of the kids are doing reading and math above grade level—at above grade level.

So we can do that. But it won't just happen because we have smooth seas. We'll have to decide. We could bring economic opportunity to the neighborhoods in the cities, the small rural towns, the Indian reservations, places that have been left behind.

We can take Medicare and Social Security out beyond the life of the baby boom generation so we don't bankrupt our kids and grandkids when we retire. We can give the seniors on Medicare a prescription drug benefit. We could have a tax cut that would continue to open the doors of college, that would help you pay if you're caring for an elderly or disabled loved one, long-term care, help you with child care.

We could have the right kind of tax cuts. We can do all that and still get this country out of debt over the next 10, 11 years, for the first time since 1835. We could do those things.

We can continue the initiatives—I hope we will—that our country has made reaching out to the world, to fight AIDS and TB and malaria. Those three things kill one in every four people who die every year in the world. We can continue to work to lift the burden of debt off the poorest countries in the world—in Africa and Latin America and in Asia—so we can have genuine partnerships with free people and help the rest of the world lift up.

You know, we're only 4 percent of the world's people, and we've got 21 percent of the world's wealth. So if we want to keep doing well, you don't have to be a rocket scientist to figure out we've got to sell something to the other 96 percent, and therefore it's good for us if they do better. It is not only the morally right thing to do to lift up people who are trying to help themselves in Africa and Latin America and Asia, throughout the world, it also turns out to be good for us. So we can do these things, but we will have to decide.

Now, that's what the race for President is all about. That's what the race for all these Senate seats are all about. Of course, I have a particular interest in one of them. [*Laugh-*

ter] I told a group the other day, I said, "This is an interesting time for me. This is the first time in 26 years I haven't been on the ballot. I've got 120 days, more or less, to be President. My party has a new leader. My family has a new candidate. My title now should be the Cheerleader in Chief of America." [*Laughter*]

But I'm glad to do it. We're all term-limited, but we've got to keep working. Right? So I ask you to think about that. Think about how thrilling it was when we started this in '91, '92, how concerned we were about all the problems of the country. Think about how troubled we were in 1993 in Memphis, talking about all these kids shooting other kids. That's what I said—Martin Luther King didn't live and die for the right of some African-American children to shoot others on the street and kill them, put drugs in their veins. That's not what it was about.

And what a long way we have come. But what I want to say to you is, for our country and our world, all the best things are still out there. We had to work so hard just to turn the old ship of state around. It was just like the country is like a big old ocean liner, and when you get going in one direction, it takes it a little while to turn that sucker around. [*Laughter*] That's why they hit—that's what the *Titanic* was all about. Sometimes you can't turn it quick enough; you hit an iceberg, right? [*Laughter*] So, thank God we got her turned around, and now it's going in the right direction. But if we keep going, all the best things are still out there.

This election is not about whether America will change. Of course, America will change. The world is changing every day. The little girls in your congregation will soon become young women, and they'll get married, and they'll have babies of their own. And before you know it, when they come home from the hospital with their babies, they'll have a little gene card, coming out of the human genome project, that will tell them basically what their little babies' whole life history is likely to be like.

And they'll have some scary things on there. It'll say, "Well, your daughter has this little gene problem and, therefore, she's at greater risk of getting breast cancer in her thirties. That's the bad news. But the good

news is, if you do these five things, you can cut the risk by two-thirds.” That kind of stuff is going to happen. We’re going to change.

And then our life expectancy, I think, in the next 20 years will go from 77 years to over 90. And it’ll change. So, what are all these old folks going to do? I hope to be one of them. [*Laughter*] What are we going to do?

We’ve got to show up for some kind of work every day. How are we going to be useful? How are we going to avoid being—how will this change your life and the way churches work and communities work? Yes, of course, it’s going to change. And there will be more different kinds of people elected. You see, California, our most populous State, no longer has a majority of people of European ancestry. It’s a polyglot State, and America soon will be.

It will change in other ways. I say this along toward the end of my talk, but one of the two people who really started me—introduced me to the African-American churches in general and to your church in particular, is Secretary Slater, our Secretary of Transportation, who has been with me for 18 years, and I want to introduce him.

Won’t be long until Rodney and people like him will be getting elected, and they’ll be calling people like me to serve in their Cabinet. And that will be good, too. [*Laughter*] That will be good, too. Things will change. Things are going to change.

So the issue is not whether we’re going to change; it is how we’re going to change. And so if you feel all those things that I feel coming from you, all the wonderful things the Bishops said, if you think I was your faithful servant, then you hear me now: The best is still out there, and all we have done is basically set the table for America’s feast.

But you’ve got to serve it up. You can’t leave the food in the refrigerator and the stove and expect the banquet to be enjoyed. But the best is still out there. This is a good country. We’re learning to live with each other a little better. And it’s changing so fast.

I’ll just tell you one little story. I got a call a couple days ago from Denzel Washington, a great actor. He’s in a new movie. I don’t know if you’ve seen it advertised, about football, about high school football and

the integration of T.C. Williams High School, and having a black football coach, in the sixties——

Audience member. A Church of God in Christ brother.

The President. Yes, a Church of God in Christ brother—right across the river here, in Alexandria, Virginia.

So here, just in a generation, how far we have come. There is this wonderful, beautiful story—I hope it will be a smash movie—about how all these white southerners found football heaven with a black coach and black players, right? [*Laughter*] It’s a story that has played itself out pretty well now. It’s going to be a great movie.

But to give you an idea of how you can’t stop change, I’ve been to T.C. Williams High School, more than once, as President. It probably has the best violence prevention program than any big high school I’ve ever seen. But it’s not a black-white high school anymore. Ain’t no telling how many people are there from how many countries. And that school district now has students—the high school is the anchor of a school district that has students of 180 different ethnic and racial groups whose families speak over 100 different native languages.

So this is not just about you and me anymore, is it? America is about a whole lot of other people, too. And our future is about a whole lot of other people.

So that’s the last point I want to leave you with. The Vice President and Senator Lieberman are good people, and they’re good servants. And my wife has the best combination of mind and heart and knowledge and ability to get things done in the context of a forum like the Senate of anybody I’ve ever known. They’re both better than me at some of the things that are important for people in public life to do. So nobody’s got all the skills, and everybody needs to be lifted up, first by the Lord and second by the people.

But you just remember what I told you. All we’ve done in the last 8 years is set the table. And the feast is still out there. And you’ve got all these little kids growing up into a world that would have been unimaginable 10 or 15 years ago. They’re going to be on their little computers, talking to kids in Africa

and Japan and Ecuador, first one place and another. It's going to be a different world.

And this is the last point I want to make. The most important thing of all is still the struggle to get people to be proud of their own racial and ethnic heritage, proud of their own religious heritage, but absolutely convinced that our common humanity is the most important thing of all.

If I could have one wish at the close of my service, it would not be for your continued prosperity—if I only had one—although I dearly hope you'll have it. It would not be even for every one of your children to get a college degree, although I deeply hope they will. If I could only have one wish, it would be that somehow, we could lay down enough of our demons to be one America and live together as brothers and sisters.

So you have been good to me. I love you. I'll never forget you. When I'm not President anymore, I'm still going to try to be a good citizen. I'm going to try to use all the things I've learned and all the things I've done to be of some use in the world. And if I can be of some use to you, all you've got to do is call.

But you remember, meanwhile, I'm going to give you 120 hard days. I'm going to try to finish the peace process in the Middle East. I'm going to try to get as much done in education and other things as I can with this Congress, and I'm going to do what I can to take my case on America's future to people who wish to listen to it.

But the most important thing is to realize we are all term-limited. It's what we do, not who we are as individuals, that matters. Now, if you can help the agents of positive change, we'll build one America. And you recognize that the table is set, but the feast has to be put out there, and it's still out there. That would be good for you, good for your children, good for our country, and good for the world. Meanwhile, if you ever need me, just call.

I love you. Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:43 p.m. in the Grand Ballroom at the Renaissance Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to Bishop Chandler D. Owens, presiding Bishop, Bishop J. Neul Haynes, first assistant, Bishop P.A. Brooks, secretary of the general board, Bishop Melvin E. Clark, director,

Second Ecclesiastical Jurisdiction of Pennsylvania, and Bishop Donnie Lindsey, former director of the Arkansas jurisdiction, Church of God in Christ; Bishop Felton M. Smith, Jr., pastor, Temple of Faith Deliverance Church of God in Christ, Chattanooga, TN; Bishop L.T. Walker, pastor, Holy Temple Cathedral Church of God in Christ, Little Rock, AR; and Alvin Brown, Senior Adviser to the Vice President for Urban Affairs.

Statement on the Adoption Bonus Awards

September 20, 2000

Today's award of nearly \$20 million in adoption bonuses to States demonstrates the dramatic success of our efforts to move more children from the foster care system to loving homes they can call their own. With this second round of awards by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, all 50 States, as well as the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico, have now earned bonuses for increasing the number of children adopted from public foster care. Last year alone, 46,000 foster care children were adopted, an increase of nearly 65 percent since 1996. This puts us well on the way to meeting my goal of doubling the number of adoptions from 28,000 in 1996 to 56,000 by 2002. I commend the States for accepting the challenge to more rapidly move children from foster care into permanent homes and the many loving families who have opened their hearts and their homes to adopt children from the foster care rolls.

I also want to thank the First Lady for her commitment and leadership on this issue. Hillary spearheaded my administration's effort to transform our child welfare system and promote adoption by leading the administration's Adoption 2002 initiative, which served as the blueprint for the Adoption and Safe Families Act that I signed into law in 1997. The adoption bonus awards were included as part of my our Adoption 2002 initiative, and were enacted as part of the Adoption and Safe Families Act, establishing the first-ever financial incentives to States to increase adoptions of children waiting in the foster care system.

**Letter to Congressional Leaders
Transmitting the Report of the
Trade and Development Agency**
September 20, 2000

Dear Mr. Chairman:

As required by section 201(d) of the Jobs Through Exports Act of 1992 (Public Law 102-549; 22 U.S.C. 2421(d)), I transmit herewith the annual report of the Trade and Development Agency for fiscal year 1999.

Sincerely,

William J. Clinton

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to Jesse Helms, chairman, Senate Committee on Foreign Relations; and Benjamin A. Gilman, chairman, House Committee on International Relations.

**Remarks at the Congressional
Hispanic Caucus Institute Dinner**
September 20, 2000

Thank you. Please be seated. Well, in case you haven't figured it out, I'm the warmup act for Los Lobos—[laughter]—and Nydia Rojas and Elvis Crespo and Tito Puente, Jr.

Let me thank you, Lucille, and all the members of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus for all you have done with me and for me these last 8 years. I thank the Institute board members for supporting these fine public servants. I thank the members of my administration who have done so much to make sure your concerns were heard, including Maria Echaveste, Mickey Ibarra, Aida Alvarez, Bill Richardson, Louis Caldera. And I understand we have the honorary Hispanic caucus in the Cabinet here tonight, Secretary Herman, Secretary Slater, and Secretary Mineta. I thank them for coming as well.

Because our administration has looked like America, we've been able to—I hope—serve America better. For example, under Secretary Caldera, the Army is cosponsoring a series of public service announcements targeted at young people between the ages of 12 and 14, many of them Hispanic, focusing on the benefits of staying in high school and getting a diploma. I thank him for that, and I thank you for that.

Last week in Philadelphia, I had an incredible experience—really Sunday, the first day of this week. I went there to dedicate and lay the first construction beam on what will be America's Constitution Center, where people will be able to go to Philadelphia, learn about how we got started as a nation, learn about how the Constitution was put together and what is in it and how it applies through countless decisions of the United States Supreme Court to all Americans down to the present day. I also had the opportunity to help to swear in as new citizens 73 immigrants from 23 different nations.

And I told them something that the American people and the Members of Congress should never forget: 8 of the 39 men who signed the Constitution were immigrants, including Alexander Hamilton, the first Secretary of the Treasury, born in the West Indies, and James Wilson of Pennsylvania, who spoke with a heavy Scottish brogue.

From the very beginning, our country has benefited from immigrants. When I went to Germany 4 or 5 years ago, I presented to the German Chancellor a copy of the Declaration of Independence which was printed the day after it was signed, July 5, 1776, in Pennsylvania, in German, because so many of the people who lived in Pennsylvania at that time had German as their first language and spoke limited, if any, English.

It is very important that we not forget that we have always been, we always will be, and God willing, we will always be strengthened by the fact that we are a nation of immigrants.

This has been a great week for me and the Latino community. Yesterday Lucille and the whole Congressional Hispanic Caucus came to see me, and we went over the remaining issues of this year. They, once again, gave me my marching orders. [Laughter] And last night Jimmy Smits had me to the National Hispanic Foundation for the Arts, and some of you perhaps were there. I had a wonderful time. And tonight I am with you, in all probability, and hopefully, the last American President who does not speak Spanish.

And I say that because I am very proud to have been President of the United States during the time when the Latino community

of America truly came of age as a political, a cultural, and an economic force. I thank you for that.

The main thing I came here to do tonight is to say that, a simple thank you. I thank the members of the Caucus for working with Al Gore and me for these last 7½ years. Think of what we have done together that would not have been possible without you, and without all the people throughout America who support you.

Together we passed a new economic plan in 1993, which got rid of the worst deficits in our history, is paying down the debt, and has given us the longest economic expansion in history. It has also given us the lowest Hispanic unemployment rate ever recorded, the lowest Hispanic poverty rate in a generation, a median income for Hispanics rising even faster than for the population as a whole, a million new Hispanic homeowners in the last 5 years.

Together we passed the family and medical leave law, which has given 25 million of our fellow citizens a chance to take some time off from work when there's a newborn baby or a sick family member, without losing their job. Together we passed an historic crime bill that put more police on our streets, take more guns off our streets, give kids more things to do to stay out of trouble and get involved in positive conduct. It was opposed by most of the members of the other party, but today, after 7 years of straight decline, crime is at a 27-year low.

Together we doubled the earned-income tax credit, which cut taxes for 15 million of our hardest working families, including more than a million Hispanic families. Together we raised the minimum wage, which benefited nearly 2 million Hispanics. And it's high time we raised it again, and I hope you will support that.

Together we doubled funding for education and training and put in place the Hispanic Education Action Plan for programs to improve Latino student outcome. And though there are still troubling gaps, Hispanic students now are scoring higher on math tests, greater percentages are completing high school, graduating from college, and getting advanced degrees. In fact, the college-going rate among Hispanic-Ameri-

cans has increased by 50 percent over the last 6 years, and the number of children—the number of Latino children in our high schools taking advance placement tests—which means they mean to go to college; otherwise, why go through all that hassle? [Laughter]. Listen to this—the number of Hispanic children taking advance placement courses has increased by 500 percent in the last 5 years.

Together we created 100 empowerment zones and enterprise communities, community development banks, doubled small business loans to minorities, tripled them to women. And under the leadership of the Vice President, these empowerment zones have helped to bring thousands of jobs to people in places who have been left behind for too long.

We provided health insurance coverage under the Children's Health Insurance Program to 2 million children, and we're determined to add 3 million more. We revolutionized welfare; the welfare rolls have been cut in half. We fought steadily to restore the benefits that were wrongfully cut from legal immigrants, and we're going to keep fighting to restore the Medicaid and CHIP coverage for children and pregnant women who are legally in the United States.

And with the strong leadership of the Hispanic Caucus, we will continue to push the majority in Congress for a vote on the "Latino and Immigrant Fairness Act."

Now, none of this would have happened without you. And I want you to know that all I feel is immense gratitude that the people of my country gave me a chance to serve, to implement the ideas that I brought to the American people in 1992 and 1996, to build a bridge to the new century and the new millennium that we could go across together. But when the Vice President tells you, "You ain't seen nothing yet," I want you to know I believe he is right.

Why? Because we have spent so much time in the last 7½ years trying to turn the ship of state around, and it takes a while to do that. It's like having an ocean liner in the middle of the ocean, and you're trying to avoid an iceberg. Will it be "Titanic" or a happy story? You know you can't do it like this. It takes time. Now we have turned

around. We're going in the right direction. We're moving forward together.

And what I want to ask you to do is to think about, what now? You know, we could actually end poverty for all the children of America. We could actually bring economic opportunity, real jobs, to all the communities that have been left behind, from the Native American reservations to the rural communities of the Delta and the Appalachia to the inner cities that still aren't prospering. We could get this country out of debt over the next 12 years, for the first time since Andrew Jackson was President in 1835. And I might add, if we did that, instead of squandering the surplus on a tax cut that's too big, it would keep interest rates a point lower for a decade, which would save people like many of you in this audience and the people who you represent, in 10 years, \$390 billion in home mortgage costs alone.

Now, so I know this is not a political evening. [Laughter] But it should be an evening for citizenship. So if you want to fulfill these dreams, if you want to meet the challenge of the aging of America when we baby boomers retire and there will only be two people working for every one person on Social Security, if you want Medicare and Social Security not to go broke and you think our seniors deserve prescription drugs, the election matters.

If you want a Patients' Bill of Rights, the election matters. If you want to stick with a strategy to lower crime that lifts children up and keeps guns out of the hands of criminals and kids, the election matters.

I'll tell you something else. If you want to put an end to delay and discrimination against highly qualified minority candidates for the Federal courts, the election matters.

Now, I am proud, as Lucille said, that our administration has appointed more Hispanics to the Federal bench than any in history. But it has been an unbelievable fight. It took 4 years just to get a vote that put the very able judge Richard Paez on the ninth circuit—4 years. Now we're fighting for another great candidate, El Paso lawyer Enrique Moreno.

Now, listen to this. You would think that the Texas Republicans would be delighted to support someone like Enrique Moreno. He graduated summa cum laude from his

university, near the top of his class in law school. A panel of State judges in Texas said he was one of the three best lawyers in west Texas. He got the highest rating from the American Bar Association. So what did the two Senators from Texas say? "He wasn't qualified to be on the Court of Appeals." And I might add, for reasons that escape me, none of the other elected Republicans in Texas have said a word about it.

Now, I can't ask you to vote for anybody tonight. I don't want to endanger your tax exempt status. [Laughter] But if you want an end to this kind of delay and denial, it would really help if you had Al Gore and Joe Lieberman and Senators like Hillary in the United States Senate. If you want to see investments made in the enforcement of our gun laws, our civil rights laws, and holding tobacco companies accountable and shrinking the citizenship backlog at INS, it would help if you had Al Gore and Joe Lieberman, and Jose Serrano as chairman of the House Committee on Commerce, Justice, State, and Judiciary Appropriations.

If you believe that there should be new market investment incentives to spread prosperity to people in places that have been left behind, it would help if you had Al Gore and Joe Lieberman, and Nydia Velasquez as chairman of the House Small Business Committee. If you want the interest of the American people to be the agenda of America's Government, it would help if you had Al Gore and Joe Lieberman, and if you had in a leadership position Bob Menendez, the vice chair of the House Democratic caucus.

There's an old Mexican proverb that says, *El que no siembra, no levanta*; he who does not sow does not harvest. In my lifetime, which, unfortunately, is longer than most of yours in this audience—and most days I'm all right about it—our country has never had a chance like this. When I became President on January 20, 1993, I dreamed that I could leave office with my country in the position to make the most of this magnificent new millennium; to stay on the far frontiers of science and technology, and do it in a way that helps all people, not just a few; to lift us all together; to build a future of our dreams for our children; to go forward as one America. But anybody in this audience who

is over 30 knows that sometimes it's harder to make a good decision when times are good than when they're tough. [Laughter]

I laugh, you know—the American people took a big chance on me in 1992. I can only imagine how many people walked into the polling place on election day in 1992 and said, “I wonder if I should really vote for that guy. I mean, President Bush says he's just a Governor from a small southern State. I don't even know where it is.” [Laughter] “He's probably too young for the job. Oh, what the heck, it's not much of a chance. The country is in the ditch.” [Laughter] I mean, that's basically what happened. It wasn't that big a chance. [Laughter]

Now, that's not true anymore. It's not true anymore. And we all have a responsibility to our fellow Americans to think deeply about this election, to dream of what we want America to look like in 10 years or 20 years, and then to go out and choose the course that will take us there. That is what we have to do.

And this is the last thing I want to tell you. I'm very proud of all these economic advances. I'm glad of the contributions we made to a strong economy that enabled more of you than ever before to afford a ticket to come here tonight. I'm glad about that. But if I could only have one wish as President for you as I leave, even more than continued prosperity, I would wish for us to have the wisdom and the tenderness to go forward as one America, across all the lines that divide us.

We are a good people. We are a smart people. We'll do fine in the face of all adversity. But we still have a lot to let go of. We've got to learn to trust each other, even if we come from different cultures and different backgrounds. We've got to learn to feel deep, abiding, bursting pride at our roots and our faith and still respect those who are different and understand that our common humanity is the most important fact of life there is.

If we do that, if we do that, believe me, you ain't seen nothing yet. And so I say, I had a wonderful time. Even the bad days were good, thanks in no small measure to many of you who always were the wind at my back. But believe me, it's there for you now. And when you hear all this fabulous

music tonight, and the Vice President comes out here and says in his emotional and heartfelt Spanish what he's got to say—[laughter]—you just keep thinking one thing. I don't want you to forget, in a quiet place, this country operates not just by the leaders but, more important, by the people.

Harry Truman said when he left the White House he would resume the most important title any American could have, that of citizen. And you are what makes this country great. You are what makes this country go. If you liked the last 8 years, if you believe you ain't seen nothing yet, you must ask yourselves, what do I have to do to make sure the right choice is made, and what do I have to do to build one America? If we all do that, the best is yet to be.

Thank you, and God bless you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 7:23 p.m. at the MCI Center. In his remarks, he referred to singers Nydia Rojas, Elvis Crespo, and Tito Puente, Jr.; Representative Lucille Roybal-Allard, chairwoman, Congressional Hispanic Caucus Institute; and actor Jimmy Smits.

Remarks at a Reception for Governor Jeanne Shaheen

September 20, 2000

Thank you very much. Thank you. First thing I would like to say is that back when we were taking pictures, a number of you commented on my dress. I'm here to take your drink order before the movie begins. [Laughter]

Actually, this is a terrific theater, and I would like to thank the owners who are here. Our hosts are here tonight, and I think we should give them a big hand. [Applause] This is a beautiful place, a project, I might add, financed by the Small Business Administration loan.

I want to thank my friend Parris Glendening for being here. We've had a wonderful partnership with Maryland. You know, they're kind of right next door to DC here. We do a lot of things with Governor Glendening. He's done a fabulous job. He's a very generous person. He's spent a lot of his time this year trying to raise money to create other Democratic governorships and

help the ones that we have get reelected, and I'm grateful.

I really wanted to come here tonight. First, I have known Jeanne Shaheen a long time, a long time before I was President, a long time before she was Governor. I went to New Hampshire the first time when Hugh Gallen was Governor. That was when I didn't have any gray hair. *[Laughter]*

And I went once to campaign for a man named Paul McEachern who is a very good man who didn't win. But I was glad to be there. Jeanne and I had a long talk then. I used to read about her all the time in the articles about what an important political operative she was, and if you wanted to run for President and you went to New Hampshire, you had to have her for you. And it's not easy—I can say this; I worked in politics from the time I was a teenager—it's not easy to make the transition from being somebody that helps someone else, to being a candidate in your own right, particularly in a very difficult environment.

So, I'm here because I really believe that I know her much better than most Presidents know most Governors. And everything she said about her record, everything she said about the difference between herself and her opponent, that's all true.

It's also true that she's had a lot of difficult challenges, one of which I'll say more about in a moment, that I think she's tried to meet in a forthright way, keeping her commitments to the voters, trying to do what's best for the people of New Hampshire, and not running away from decisions that are bound to make everybody a little bit unhappy just because they break so many eggs. And I admire her.

And I think that people who are strong leaders who do what needs to be done should be rewarded at election time and kept in office. So that's one reason I'm here. The second reason I'm here is, there is nobody in America, no living public figure, who owes more to the State of New Hampshire or loves it more than I do.

Hillary and I were laughing the other night about how quickly these 8 years have gone by, how busy they were, how jam-packed they were, how full of pressure they were, how embarrassing it is that I can't remember

some things that I'm supposed to be able to remember, or I remember some things we did, and I can't remember the year in which we did it. I used to pride myself on having a flawless memory. But I remember everything about New Hampshire in 1992. *[Laughter]*

And a lot of you here helped me. And the people of New Hampshire, even the ones that didn't vote for me—even the Republicans helped me—because I spent a lot of time just going around talking to people and listening to them and hearing the rhythm of their dreams and hopes and frustrations and seeing the personal manifestation of the difficulties our countries faced back then.

And I think it would be good for them if Governor Shaheen was reelected. And I'm doing what I think is right by people who have done right by me, twice. I never thought a Democrat could win New Hampshire once, much less twice, for President. *[Laughter]* And I hope we'll make it three in a row this time.

But here is the third thing I would like to say, and I hope it causes no difficulty for the Governor. I don't think it will. But the most difficult problem she's had to face that can't make anybody happy is how to finance the schools. But what I would like the people of New Hampshire to know is that today, there are 36 States, 36 of our 50 States are in court today, not just one or two or three, 36, trying to work out the agonizing conflicts between everyone's desire to have taxes as low as possible, everybody else's desire to maintain maximum local control, and figuring out how to equalize school funding so that all kids have a chance to get a good education at an adequate level of funding.

And what I would like you to know is, there are no perfect answers. There is no perfect answer. But I have fought—one of the big reasons I have fought so hard—and we nearly doubled Federal funding for education and training while we were getting rid of the deficit and going from a \$290 billion deficit to a \$211 billion surplus—we have nearly doubled funding for education and training since I've been here.

And I know that some people in New Hampshire, because they believe in local control and want it all local taxes, even in

those State taxes, they turned down the Goals 2000 money. Do you know what Goals 2000 required States to do? Here is the strings we attached. We said, "If you take this money, you have to set standards to reach the national education goals and figure out how you're going to reach them." That's it.

The truth is that under Secretary Riley, himself a former Governor, we have actually cut the rules and regulations imposed on local school districts in States for the Department of Education by two-thirds over what they were in the previous Republican administration, a little-known fact. I would appreciate it if my friends from New Hampshire would not keep that a secret in the coming election.

But what we did do is say, "Hey, we want to give you more money, and we want you to figure out how to spend it. But you have to spend it in a way that is designed to get results." Now, that's the only string we imposed, which is why the Governor was right and her adversary was wrong on whether they should take Goals 2000 money.

New Hampshire needs all the Federal money we can get to New Hampshire, because there are a lot of people in New Hampshire that don't have a lot of money. There are a lot of school districts in New Hampshire that don't have a lot of property wealth. And whatever the right decision is for New Hampshire and how to resolve all these difficult questions, the National Government should make education a national priority, should recognize that even though we have more schoolchildren in school than ever before, in most States, a smaller percentage of the property owners have kids in the schools.

So you have these blinding crosscurrents of politics. And in New Hampshire, anything that has the word "tax" in it is more explosive than in most places, as all of you know. But what you need to understand is that she needs our support, because she's supported improvements in education, and because there is no perfect answer to how the schools can fairly and adequately be financed.

And one of the things that we ought to do, and one of the reasons Al Gore ought to be elected President, one of the reasons the people of New Hampshire ought to vote for him and Joe Lieberman and make it three

in a row for our side—maybe has never happened—is that we are committed to doing this.

You know, the 100,000 teacher program allows States that are growing rapidly and don't have a lot of money to have smaller classes in the early grades. We know it gets results. The school financing program allows States who have to do new building or major repairs to do it and keep their property taxes lower than they otherwise would be.

So it is true that under our administration, we have set more rigorous standards, and we've been more results-oriented for spending Federal money. That's true. I plead guilty. But it's also true that we've tried to say less to the States about how they had to do it.

We have cleared out a lot of the underbrush of micromanagement that was there before we showed up. And by doubling the amount of education and training funds, we have tried to at least make the solutions that have to be found by the Governor and the New Hampshire Legislature and the people of New Hampshire and people like that all over the country.

There are 36 States in court, but over 40 could be easily. So I would hope that our friends from New Hampshire would go back and tell the voters that—that we're out here trying to help you. Whatever solution you resolve, the burden on the people of New Hampshire will be lower if our policies prevail. And on every single decision that she mentioned, she was on the right side, from the Martin Luther King holiday to participating in Goals 2000 to taking our school-to-work funds and all these other education initiatives.

There isn't anything more important than figuring out how to do this, because if you look at the growth of the New Hampshire economy, they've almost got negative unemployment up there now. But what that means is that the education premium is even bigger than it was before.

I'm here because I admire her, because I support her, because I love New Hampshire. And I'll never repay my debt to the people there—and because I understand them, even when they're being ornery. *[Laughter]* And I know that they're stern

taskmasters at election time, but she has worked hard. She's worked effectively with us, and if for no other reason than New Hampshire ranks first in the participation of children in the Child Health Insurance Program, she's earned reelection.

That's the last thing I want to tell you. We appropriated funds at the Balanced Budget Act in 1997, the biggest expansion of child health care since Medicaid was passed in 1965. We appropriated funds for 5 million children from low-income working families to get health insurance, children that desperately needed it, but their parents earned just a little too much money to get them into the Medicaid program—5 million.

Today, 3 years later, we have only enrolled a little over 2 million. Why? And Parris has done well, too. But the reason is that not every State has done that well. So there are children all over America tonight who are sick, who need to see doctors, who need to have checkups, who need to have everything that's covered in these programs who don't get it. But they get it in New Hampshire because she's been a good Governor.

So I want you to go home, those of you from New Hampshire, and redouble your effort. I did say to Jeanne, for those of you who gave money tonight, in New Hampshire, \$75,000 is still real money. That's a lot of television ads on the Manchester TV station. And if you can do anything to help her, I hope you will.

I think that this election, because of what she represents and because of her opponent and the clear ideological divide, represents one of the seminal contests in our country this year. But the most important thing is that the people that live in New Hampshire need, deserve, and ought to have her leadership for another term.

I'm glad we're here tonight. And if you can do anything between now and November to help her, I hope you will do that, too. Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:15 p.m. in Theater One at the Visions Theater. In his remarks, he referred to Gov. Parris N. Glendening of Maryland; and Gordon Humphrey, Republican gubernatorial candidate in New Hampshire. Gov. Jeanne Shaheen of New Hampshire is a candidate for reelection.

Remarks on Departure for Flint, Michigan

September 21, 2000

"Conservation and Reinvestment Act"

Good morning, ladies and gentlemen. I would like to begin by thanking this distinguished group of Americans who have joined me, and I want to introduce them all. To my immediate left, looking over my shoulder here is Mayor Brent Coles of Boise, Idaho; Senator Gaylord Nelson, the founder of Earth Day; and next to him, his small namesake, Major League Baseball legend Gaylord Perry. Henry Diamond is here, who is a partner in the law firm of Beveridge and Diamond, and a distinguished environmentalist, heading the largest environmental law firm in the Nation; Roger Schlickeisen, the president of Defenders of Wildlife, over my right shoulder here. Jack Hanna is here, the director emeritus of the Columbus Zoo; Frank Beamer, the head coach of the Virginia Tech football team—as he said, "Last year number two; and rising this year." —[laughter]— Jimmie Lee Solomon, the senior vice president of baseball operations for Major League Baseball; Dr. Michael Hirshfield, the vice president at the research protection programs of the Chesapeake Bay Foundation; David Waller, the director of wildlife resources division of the Georgia Department of Natural Resources, who told me to say something good about wildlife today. I often feel that we're in the presence of it here in Washington. [Laughter] And I appreciate his efforts to preserve it. And the lady to my left is Sue Maturkanich, who is a teacher from Grand Rapids, Michigan. I wanted to thank her for being here and for her interest in the intersection of education and the environment for our children.

These conservation and community leaders have come here from all over America to work for the protection of our open spaces and our most precious lands, to ask Congress to provide permanent funding for them with Federal funds dedicated to supporting State and local communities.

Under the leadership of Chairman Don Young and Congressman George Miller, the House recently cast an overwhelming bipartisan vote to provide permanent funding for

America's open spaces from the resources the Federal Government gets from Federal offshore oil leases. There is significant support in the Senate for this legislation. And we are here today to ask the Senate leadership to work with Senators Frank Murkowski and Jeff Bingaman, again on a bipartisan basis, to pass the "Conservation and Reinvestment Act" known as CARA.

When I was growing up in Arkansas, I had such easy access to parks and woods and mountains and rivers and lakes that I suppose I took them for granted a little bit. But we know that we can no longer take our access to our natural resources and our wildlife for granted. In too many communities, our green spaces and our open spaces continue to disappear.

For too many of our young people and their families, it's becoming harder and harder to protect what we have left, the meadows and seashores, the lands farmers harvest, the streams where families fish. With more and more people visiting our national parks and forests, we also have to do more to protect and preserve these treasures. That's why Gaylord Perry is here today. He believes that all our children should have a place to play Little League ball. That's why Sue Maturkanich is here today, all the way from Michigan, to remind the Congress how essential it is for children to have a good place to play.

For 7½ years now, Vice President Gore and I have fought for these causes, to protect our natural resources, to provide communities with resources they need to preserve green and open spaces. Working with Congress, again on a bipartisan basis, we protected Yellowstone from the threat of mining, preserved the Baca Ranch in New Mexico, saved age-old California redwoods, set aside huge stretches of the Mojave Desert for the national park system, and launched the most ambitious environmental restoration effort ever in the magnificent Florida Everglades. But we also provided significant new resources to help States and communities preserve farms, urban parks, and other precious open spaces.

The mayor of Boise is here, as I said earlier. We worked with him to give him the funds to develop a 55-acre recreation com-

plex so that children and parents have a place to enjoy the wonders of nature close to home.

Here in Washington, DC, we helped the city rebuild Girard Street Park, the only open space in an entire urban neighborhood, a park that will give children a place to play in safety and the community a place to call their own.

We believe every community should have such places so that neighborhood parks and baseball fields are as common as cell phones and video games. That's why CARA is so important and why Congress must pass it now before it adjourns.

I want to make it clear: The virtue of CARA is one of the things which makes it controversial in the ordinary course of congressional operations. It would set aside money that we have coming in every year, automatically, for these communities for these purposes, so that they would always know that there was a stream of money there to protect the future for our children.

I also hope Congress, before it leaves, will provide adequate resources for us to continue to protect our air and water and ensure permanent funding for land conservation. And I hope they will send me budget bills free of anti-environmental riders. Once again, too many of these bills are being watered down and polluted with riders aimed at weakening public health protections, blocking commonsense efforts to combat climate change, and surrendering public lands to private interests.

In the last 24 hours, Congress has added some more of these riders. I vetoed bills before because they contained them, and if I have to, I'll do it again. But I ask Congress to drop them so we can get on with the people's business, and they can go back home and talk to the voters.

A century ago President Theodore Roosevelt set our Nation on the path of conservation. He reminded us, and I quote, "Our responsibilities to the coming millions is like that of parents to children. In wasting our resources, we are wronging our descendants."

Since then, we've answered President Roosevelt's call to conservation. And time after time, over the entire length of the 20th

century, we put the restoration and protection of the environment ahead of partisan conflict.

In the weeks ahead, we should continue to do this. We have a unique and profoundly important effort to give people at the grass-roots level in America a permanent source of funding to protect our natural resources.

A chance like this comes along once in a great while. That's why there were over 300 votes for this bill in the House. And there ought to be 100 votes for it in the Senate, and I hope we can get it done, and these folks, by coming here today, have made it more likely.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10 a.m. in the Rose Garden at the White House.

Remarks at Mott Community College in Flint, Michigan

September 21, 2000

Give her another hand. *[Applause]* Wasn't she great? Thank you, Karla.

Well, good afternoon, everyone. I am delighted to be here at Mott Community College. And I want to begin by thanking Karla Hudson again for her sterling example, but even more for her commitment to helping other people build a better future for themselves.

I also want to thank my longtime friend and now Cabinet member, Secretary Mineta, for his years and years of commitment to empowering people with disabilities. I thank my National Economic Adviser, Gene Sperling, who is a native of Michigan, for the work he did on the announcements I will make today. And Mayor Stanley, thank you, as always. Judy Brewer, thank you for your work.

I also want to acknowledge Pamela Loving from the Career Alliance and Michael Zelle from the Disability Network for what they're doing. I'd like to thank Dr. Shaink, the board, and the faculty members and the students of Mott Community College for making us welcome here today.

And I'd like to acknowledge a couple of other people who came with me today to be here—first, the remarkable president of Gallaudet University in Washington, DC, Dr. I.

King Jordan, and a marathon runner—congratulations for being here—James Clark, vice president at NCR; Carl Augusto, the president of the American Foundation for the Blind; and from the administration, Judy Heumann, the Assistant Secretary for Special Education Rehab Services, and Jonathan Young from the White House. They're all around there. Thank you all very much for being here.

I would also like to thank the Vice President in his absence for the work that he has done with me for 8 years to empower all Americans.

Looking back, I think this is my fourth trip, Mayor, to Flint. I'm beginning to feel at home. I'm afraid if I come back, I'll get a tax bill, I've been here so often. *[Laughter]* When I first came here in 1992, Mayor Stanley welcomed me. Now I'm about to leave the Presidency, and when I'm gone, he'll still be mayor. *[Laughter]* I want to know what the secret is. *[Laughter]*

Let me say, as Secretary Mineta said, this is a very fortunate time for our country, and it happened because of a lot of people across America working together. Flint has worked hard, against tough odds, to bring this city back, to prepare for a new century. And you have made a great deal of progress. I am quite sure that the people whom I visited today who are involved with the Disability Network and the Career Alliance and the people at this community college have played a major role in the resurgence of this fine community.

But we all know that not everyone has shared in the American economic renaissance. We all know there are people and places who have been left behind, including millions of Americans with significant disabilities who want to go to work but whose path is blocked and who could work and could contribute, not only to their own lives but to the rest of us, as well.

The great labor priest George Higgins articulated a fundamental truth when he said, "Work is an important way in which we exercise our humanity. In return, society offers us not only our daily bread but a sense that we, ourselves, are honored for the contributions we make."

When I sought the Presidency in 1991 and 1992, my first objective was to give work back to the American people. One of the strongest supporters I had was your former Governor, who is here with me today, and my friend of many years, Jim Blanchard, and I thank him for coming. Not only here in communities in Michigan but in far away New Hampshire, Jim went with me in the snows to listen to people who had lost their livelihoods, who broke down over dinner, crying because they were afraid they'd never be able to send their kids to school.

And we have, in large measure, succeeded. But we have not given every American the chance, first, to get an education, and second, to use their education to work and achieve the American dream. We have an obligation to do it, an obligation that requires us to keep expanding the circle of opportunity. And in this information age, when the pace of change increasingly accelerates at a breathtaking rate, we cannot achieve that goal if we leave any Americans stranded on the other side of the now famous digital divide.

Now, for nearly 8 years now, the Vice President and I have worked to break down barriers that hold people back. One of the most important things we did was to fight hard in the Telecommunications Act of 1996 to insist that people with disabilities have full access to telephone equipment and service that most people take for granted. And one of our Federal Communications Commissioners, Susan Ness, is here with me today. I thank her, and I thank all of those who helped us to fight for the rights of disabled Americans in the Telecommunications Act of 1996.

In 1998 we pushed through the Work Force Investment Act, requiring that any information technology the Federal Government buys be accessible to people with disabilities. And in 1999, I was very proud to sign the Work Incentives Improvement Act, which will enable Americans with disabilities to retain their Medicare or Medicaid coverage when they go to work and provide more choices for job training. This will give tens of thousands of Americans the opportunity to be in the work force.

But breaking down barriers is not enough. People actually have to have the tools they

need to take advantage of this remarkable moment of opportunity—especially the tools they need in cyberspace. There are truly amazing new possibilities, as I saw today on my tour.

Through information technologies, a person with a disability, such as the great physicist Stephen Hawking, can continue to be one of the world's top astrophysicist and—and this is a big “and,” because he suffers from Lou Gehrig's disease and is the longest living person, as far as we know, in history with that disease—and I'm convinced that one of the reasons he is alive today, with the fire in his eyes and the passion burning in his heart, is that he can not only continue to learn; he can continue to communicate what he knows and what he thinks to the rest of the world, thanks to technology.

Millions of other people with disabilities can also access and use the information superhighway if we build the necessary on ramps. For example, we're creating a national network of community technology centers so that all Americans, no matter where they live or what their incomes, have easy and affordable access to the Internet.

I visited America's newest community technology center this afternoon, right here in Flint, a partnership between the Department of Education, Mott Community College, and the nonprofit Disability Network, focusing on empowering people with disabilities to access the Internet and learn computer skills. I was amazed by a lot of what I saw: technology that translates web pages aloud for people who are blind or visually impaired; provides captioning for deaf and hard-of-hearing people; enables people with significant physical disabilities to control a computer through eye movement and brain waves. This technology has unbelievable potential.

I have a friend in North Carolina, named Joe Martin, with Lou Gehrig's disease. Years ago, we worked together on education and the economy in the South. Joe Martin then was in great health. He was vigorous, energetic, charismatic, compelling, and effective. He's had Lou Gehrig's disease for some time now, and in spite of how great he was then, he is greater today in every way. Although he can't walk or talk or use his hands, his

eyes provide a window on the world. With EyeGaze technology, he can look at a computer screen and type away just using his eyes. He E-mails people here in Flint. With another glance he can activate an electronic voice that reads his words aloud. This astounding technology has enabled him to keep his job as a banker, to talk with his wife and friends and, now, write an about-to-be-published compelling book about his life.

Some of you may have heard of a young swimmer from South Africa, named Terence Parkin. Yesterday he won the silver medal in the mens' 200-meter breast stroke, one of the best athletes in the world. He also happens to be deaf, and he can't hear the starting buzzer that used to begin all swimming races. Instead, he can now watch for a personal, yellow starting light, which flashes at his starting block at the same time the buzzer goes off. By installing the simplest of technology, a little light bulb, officials gave this determined and gifted athlete his shot at glory. He took it. Now he can celebrate the flash of sunlight off his silver medal, and aren't you glad he got the chance to race?

These kinds of innovations are going to make a tremendous difference in people's lives, especially as we incorporate them into mainstream technology, something Judy emphasized. Here in Genesee County, employers can't find enough people to fill all the technical jobs. Many pay \$20 an hour.

Now, if we want to keep the rest of the economy growing, we have to make information technology more accessible. It's responsible for about 30 percent of the economic growth we've enjoyed over the last 8 years. And we have to bring more people into the circle of opportunity to work in information fields. That means people with disabilities have to be able to enter the 21st century work force, not only for your own benefit but for the rest of America as well.

Today I am honored to announce several major public and private commitments that will move us in the right direction. First, 45 chief executive officers of American high-tech companies have pledged to make their products more accessible to people with disabilities, training their employers to develop new accessible software, hardware, and services.

Second, 25 of our Nation's leading research universities have committed to helping us provide equal access to information, including new course work for engineering majors and new tenure-track faculty positions to address these challenges. That's a big deal. Think about it: Major universities giving people tenure to teach how to provide equal access to all Americans without regard to disabilities, to have information-age technology. That's wonderful.

Third—I'm trying to keep up with all of this. Third, I am pleased to announce that Flint's very own CS Mott Foundation—and I believe the president of the Foundation, Bill White, is here—will support these goals by funding a blue-ribbon task force, headed by the Disability Network, to figure out how to make this new technology more affordable. It's not enough to develop it if people can't afford it.

Fourth, I'm directing my Cabinet to explore ways of enhancing Medicare and Medicaid to help people with disabilities pay for technologies to enable them to live and work independently in their communities. The Department of Education will provide grants totaling \$4 million to the Web Accessibility Initiative and the National Center for Accessible Media, to help to ensure that people with disabilities can tap into the World Wide Web and make the most of on-line learning.

And finally, I am particularly proud to announce that AmeriCorps is awarding \$9 million in grants to put 1,200 volunteers into schools and communities to teach students with disabilities and children from difficult backgrounds the skills they need to take advantage of the Internet.

One project in North Carolina will provide computer training to 300 students who are blind or visually impaired, showing them a whole new horizon of possibilities. And I know, of course, that AmeriCorps volunteers have been active in the disability community here in Flint, and I thank them for their work. And thanks for wearing your T-shirt today. You look good. Thank you.

I've got to get in a little plug for AmeriCorps now. Our legislation reauthorizing AmeriCorps is now pending in the Congress. I have now received a letter signed by 49 of the Nation's 50 Governors asking

Congress to reauthorize AmeriCorps and other community programs administered by the Corporation for National Service, including the new E-Corps program to bridge the digital divide. I hope Congress will take a look at what you've done here and reauthorize AmeriCorps.

Let me just make two points in closing. Once more, bridging the digital divide is not just the morally right thing to do; it is the smart thing to do. I remember a decade ago when people were debating the Americans with Disabilities Act, critics said it would be too expensive to make public facilities available to put in curb cuts, handrails, to put those signs in braille up. They were wrong. Since we've torn down those barriers, more than a million Americans with disabilities have entered the work force, and we have had the strongest economy America has ever known. It is good to help people live their dreams.

And if we build new onramps to the information superhighway, people with disabilities will help us build an even stronger America and, I might add, share in the promise of the declaration of true independence.

The second thing I'd like to say is, this is about way more than economics. It's important to be able to earn a living, and I want all of you to contribute to America's economic welfare. But it's about more than economics. A century ago, visionaries here in Flint harnessed the potential of new technology to build the world's largest auto company. Their success gave Americans a mobility and freedom that reshaped the entire economic and physical landscape of our Nation.

Today, at the dawn of the information age, we have the potential to give millions of Americans even greater freedom in cyberspace. As I said, it's about more than economics. You know, when I was driving from my last stop here, there were police along the way at intersections, making sure that no children got in the way of the motorcade or no cars went through the stop sign. One of those police officers was in a wheelchair.

One of my speechwriters has one disabled arm and one prostheses. He writes a heck of a speech. It's nice that he's got a job, but it's more important that the feelings of his heart can be expressed. One of the things

I've learned in nearly 30 years in public life and a few years before that, just sort of ambling around the world, is that everybody's got a story; everybody's got dreams; everybody's afraid sometimes and brave sometimes. And in the end, when you strip it all away, there's not a great deal of difference in the relative significance of our stories. If you put all the people in the world end to end, with the person with the lowest IQ on one end and the highest IQ on the other, you couldn't stick a straw between any two people.

The whole premise of America is that we are inherently, in a fundamental way, equal, though unique. People carry different burdens in life, and everybody, even the most blessed, carry a few. God puts bigger burdens on some than others, but everybody should have the chance to have their story. In the end, in the not completely knowable terrain of the human heart is the real argument for all these efforts.

So I ask you, I'll do everything I can in the time remaining. For the rest of my life I'll be grateful that I happened to be President at this moment of true revolution in human ability. But we have to keep working and never forget the economics is important, but the dreams matter more.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:15 p.m. in the Ballinger Field House. In his remarks, he referred to Karla Hudson, rehabilitation counselor, Michigan Commission for the Blind, who introduced the President; Mayor Woodrow Stanley of Flint; Judy Brewer, director, Web Accessibility Initiative; Pamela Loving, president and chief executive officer, Career Alliance; Michael Zelle, executive director, Disability Network; and Richard Shaink, president, Mott Community College.

Statement on the Treasury Surplus

September 21, 2000

Today the Department of the Treasury is announcing that, for the first 11 months of this year, the surplus stands at a record \$171 billion, more than twice the surplus at this time last year. In total, we are on track to pay off a record \$360 billion of publicly held

debt over the last 3 years, including over \$220 billion in this year alone.

This dramatic fiscal progress did not happen by accident. A long-term commitment to tough choices and fiscal discipline, not to short-term political gestures, has helped put America on track to pay down the debt by 2012. The majority in Congress should not jeopardize the longest economic expansion in history by failing to adopt our long-term strategy to make America debt free for the first time since 1835.

Let's work together to invest in our future by strengthening Social Security and Medicare, including a voluntary, affordable Medicare prescription drug benefit, making investments in key priorities like education, and putting America on course to be debt free for the first time since Andrew Jackson was President.

Memorandum on the Interagency Task Force To Examine the Role of Medicare and Medicaid Coverage of Assistive Technologies in Encouraging the Employment of Persons with Disabilities

September 21, 2000

Memorandum for the Attorney General, the Secretary of Health and Human Services, the Secretary of Education, the Secretary of Labor, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs

Subject: Interagency Task Force to Examine the Role of Medicare and Medicaid Coverage of Assistive Technologies in Encouraging the Employment of Persons with Disabilities

The Ticket to Work and Work Incentives Improvement Act of 1999, the last legislation that I signed during the 20th Century, was a breakthrough in helping persons with disabilities enter the workforce. Persons with disabilities can now return to work and retain their Medicare and Medicaid coverage. No longer will they be forced to make an unfair choice between work and essential health care coverage. The Work Incentives law affirms that persons with disabilities can and do make valuable contributions to society

through participation in the American workforce.

In ensuring that persons with disabilities have the same opportunities to work as all Americans, our next step is to take advantage of the remarkable advances in "assistive technologies"—the innovative devices that facilitate independent living and meaningful employment for persons with disabilities. This year I have included \$100 million in my budget, an increase of \$14 million over FY 2000, for disability and technology research, including assistive technology research, at the National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research. I have also included in my budget this year \$41 million for State-based assistive technology programs through the Department of Education. The National Center for Medical Rehabilitation Research, which is overseen by the National Institutes of Health, and the Department of Veterans Affairs, each provide \$30 million in grants for assistive technology research. Together, these funds will support comprehensive research and education on the use of assistive technologies to further integrate persons with disabilities into their community and the workforce.

While the Work Incentives law extended Medicare and Medicaid to workers with disabilities, the Federal Government must make a comprehensive effort to determine how best to make these programs more effective for persons with disabilities, including improved coverage of assistive technologies. It is especially important to examine how medically necessary assistive technologies may facilitate independent living and also support employment for persons with disabilities.

I hereby direct the Secretary of Health and Human Services to convene an interagency Task Force on Health Care Coverage of Assistive Technologies that includes the Departments of Health and Human Services, Justice, Education, Labor, Veterans Affairs, and other agencies, as appropriate. The Task Force shall study the role that Medicare and Medicaid does and should play in the coverage of assistive technology devices. The work of the Task Force is intended to provide a framework for future Medicare and Medicaid coverage decisions that complements

my Administration's overall efforts to promote employment opportunities for persons with disabilities.

I direct the Task Force to conduct a study on the role of Medicare and Medicaid in covering assistive technologies that encourage employment of individuals with disabilities. The study should:

- (a) examine current Medicare and Medicaid coverage of assistive technology devices and the cost of providing such coverage. Assess the current coverage criteria under Medicare and Medicaid with comparisons to the private insurance market. Review and evaluate other past and on-going research on Medicare and Medicaid coverage of assistive technologies;
- (b) seek input from the disability community to identify the types of medically necessary assistive technologies that facilitate independent living and employment. Develop criteria for identifying such devices;
- (c) determine whether provision of assistive technologies may substitute for other Medicare and Medicaid health care services such as personal care services and, if so, provide an estimate of the potential savings;
- (d) analyze Medicare and Medicaid medical necessity guidelines to determine whether they can support employment while continuing to meet the health care focus of the Medicare and Medicaid programs. As we move toward an increased employment of persons with disabilities, there is a need to study the intersection of the concepts of disability, medical necessity, and employment;
- (e) determine an appropriate delineation of responsibility for coverage of assistive technologies between publicly financed health care and employers by evaluating employers' responsibilities under the Americans with Disabilities Act, section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, and the Assistive Technology Act; and
- (f) make recommendations for administrative and legislative changes to the Medicare and Medicaid programs, in-

cluding an estimate of costs, to encourage coverage of medically necessary assistive technologies that also support employment of persons with disabilities.

This memorandum does not create any right or benefit, substantive or procedural, enforceable by a party at law against the United States, its officers or employees, or any other persons.

William J. Clinton

Remarks to the Michigan State Bar Association in Detroit, Michigan

September 21, 2000

Thank you very much, ladies and gentlemen, and thank you for that warm welcome. Thank you, President Butzbaugh, for that introduction, even though you almost took my speech off with you. *[Laughter]*

And I also want to thank your incoming bar vice president, Reginald Turner, because he was a White House fellow, and I know he's chairing your Access to Justice Task Force now. And I was glad he was out there. Thank you. And I want to acknowledge the presence here of your attorney general, Jennifer Granholm, and the president of the Legal Services Corporation, John McKay, and Judge Harold Hood, the first State bar commission chair on gender, race, and ethnic bias issues. That's very important. I thank you.

I'd also like to say that my longtime friend Mayor Archer was here and had to leave, but his wife, Trudy Archer, is here. And I thank you, Trudy, for staying around. You've heard me speak a lot before, and you didn't have to do that. I thank you.

When the mayor heard I was going to be in Michigan today, he told me you were here, and you were interested in these access-to-justice issues. And he told me that I was coming to the bar association. *[Laughter]* We've been friends, as I said, a very, very long time. He and Hillary used to work together in the ABA, back when he was a judge and before I was President, on the participation of women and minorities in the bar. So I've known Dennis for many years, and we share

a common interest in a lot of the things that you're concerned about now.

I would like to begin by congratulating those who were honored for 50 years of service in the legal profession. A tremendous amount has been done in the last half century to increase access to justice, from the establishment of our modern civil rights laws to the creation of Legal Services Corporation, to the acceptance of public interest practice, to the growing numbers of women and minorities in the profession. And Michigan lawyers clearly have been on the forefront of those efforts. I already mentioned the role Mayor Archer played in the ABA when he was on the Supreme Court.

I'd like to mention two of those honored tonight: Leonard Grossman has given a lifetime service for civil liberties; and Judge Damon Keith, who I had the honor to know before I was President, for his life of service in civil rights.

Tonight I would like to talk about a couple of issues that I think are profoundly important to the question of access to justice and the future of one of its cornerstones, the Legal Services Corporation.

We're all here because we believe equal justice is the birthright of every American, but there remains a crying need for the work of the Legal Services Corporation to make that principle a reality for all citizens, including that little baby. I don't mind having babies cry in my speech. *[Laughter]* The only thing I hate about babies crying is, it reminds me how old I am. *[Laughter]*

The Legal Services Corporation has been important to my family for a long time. In the 1970's, when President Carter was in office, he appointed Hillary to the Legal Services Corporation Board, and she served as its youngest chair. And in all these years we have cared a great deal about it. Every budget I have submitted as President has requested more funding for legal services, but every budget passed by Congress—that's the good news, but every budget I have passed by Congress has drastically slashed my request, and funding has declined by 25 percent since 1996, when plainly, the number of people in our country who need access to legal services and who can't afford them has substantially increased.

Again this year the Congress is proposing to flatline or cut the budget that I have asked to be increased by \$36 million. So if any of you know anybody in Congress and you can get me another vote or two, I'd appreciate it.

Now seriously, this is not some sort of abstract concept or, as some Members of Congress, I think, honestly believe, just sort of a luxury our democracy can do without. It is tens of thousands of Americans who seek a lawyer and can't consult with one because they don't have the money for it. Hard-working people in rural communities or inner cities, many of whom have never even seen a lawyer. It is a profound failing in our system of justice when we don't provide legal services but we continue to maintain we are all equal before the law.

Obviously, you think lawyers make a difference, or you wouldn't be one. And I ask you again, this—for most of our history, since legal services came into being, this has not been a partisan issue. And I would hope it would not be again. Our country will have a \$211 billion surplus this year. We can afford \$36 million more for legal services.

But I'd also like to talk about the responsibilities of the profession, because the Government can't do all of this alone. Since antiquity, lawyers have been expected to give of their time and talent pro bono. It is essential for our democracy and the future of this profession that everyone who needs a lawyer can get one and that everyone who might one day need a lawyer trusts the system will work in that event for him or her.

Over the last decade our strong economy has actually increased pressure, as you know, to bill more hours and cut back on pro bono work. Surveys tell us that lawyers at the Nation's highest grossing firms are now averaging just 36 hours a year in pro bono work. That is down dramatically from the 56 hours averaged in 1992 and well below the 50 hours recommended by the ABA.

I know this bar association has been a leader in responding to these pressures and meeting the desperate needs for counsel. You created one of the largest and best State bar access programs in the entire Nation. And I thank you for that. I hope you will continue to advocate this position with others

in other States who run law firms or work with young lawyers. Pro bono work is good experience and good for the standing of the profession in the community. It is also vital for our democracy.

I can't help saying, in light of all the publicity that the death penalty cases have received lately, this issue is more important than ever. The Governor of Illinois declared a moratorium on executions in Illinois because there were so many questions about whether innocent people had been convicted.

Many States have failed to adequately fund their public defender systems; others have failed to fund them at all. In one of our largest States, two attempts to pass public defender systems were actually vetoed. And we have to do more. There is a very important piece of legislation in the United States Senate today, sponsored by the Republican and Democratic Senators from Vermont, Senators Leahy and Jeffords, and others, which would provide funding for DNA testing and for adequate assistance of counsel in all capital cases. And I hope that the bar will support that objective.

Now, let me just say, I couldn't speak before a group of lawyers, especially in Michigan, without mentioning what I think is another threat to equal justice under the law and to access to justice, and that is the Senate slowdown in the consideration and confirmation of my nominees to our courts.

Let me say, I know this is a controversy which has been building for some years, which to some extent, predated my service as President. This was a very important issue to me not only because I've been a lawyer and the attorney general of my State but because I used to teach law, criminal law, criminal procedure, admiralty and antitrust, and most importantly, constitutional law. And when I became President, I made a commitment to myself that I would appoint members to the Federal judiciary that were broadly reflective of our country in terms of gender and race and other different background experiences, that would meet the highest standards of the American Bar Association, and that would be essentially nonpolitical, that would be fair and not overly result-oriented in dealing with cases.

The judges that I have appointed have gotten more top ABA ratings than those of any President in 40 years. And independent analyses have demonstrated that they have not been in their decisionmaking particularly ideologically driven, unlike the judges that previous Presidents have appointed.

Now nevertheless, even making allowances for the fact that in election years there's normally a slowdown if the President is of one party and the Senate is of another, if you look at the whole record, the Senate majority has been far less forthcoming with me than Democratic Senates were with Presidents Reagan and Bush, even though their nominees were, on average, not as highly rated by the ABA as my nominees.

A blue ribbon panel, moreover, recently found that during the 105th Congress, nominations of women and minorities tended to take 2 months longer to be considered than those of white males, and minorities were rejected twice as often, having nothing to do with their ABA ratings, I might add.

The Senate has 42 nominations before it right now; 34 of those people have never even had a hearing; 20 of them have been nominated to fill empty seats that have been declared judicial emergencies, places where our legal business is not getting done and, therefore, access to justice is not fully guaranteed. Two of those judicial emergencies are on the sixth circuit, here in Michigan, where one-fourth of the seats are vacant.

But you'd never know it from how the Senate has acted, or refused to act. Judge Helene White, who ought to be Judge Keith's successor, has waited for a hearing for 3½ years, longer than any nominee in history. She is here tonight, I think, and I want to thank her for hanging in there, through an ordeal that no one should have to endure. Stand up. *[Applause]* Thank you.

Kathleen McCree Lewis has been waiting a year for her hearing. She would be the first African-American woman on the sixth circuit. The ABA unanimously gave her its highest rating. Now, if both the Senators from this State would push for a hearing, we might still get both of them confirmed, and we could certainly get one of them confirmed.

This is wrong, and what you need to know is that the sixth circuit is not alone. Look

at the fourth circuit, in the southeastern part of our country. It has the highest percentage of African-Americans of any Federal circuit in the country. One-third of its judgeships are vacant, and although it has the largest percentage of African-Americans of any circuit, it has never had a single African-American or, indeed any person of color as a judge.

For years—I mean, for years and years—I have sent up one qualified nominee after another. There are now, still, two well-respected African-Americans whose nominations are pending from that circuit, Judge James Wynn from North Carolina, and Roger Gregory of Virginia. Those seats are also judicial emergencies, but neither nominee has even gotten a hearing.

Now as I said, in election year, there's always been some slowdown, but if you look at the statistics here over the last 5 years, this Senate has been far less forthcoming on these nominees than the Democratic Senates were with Republican Presidents who were my predecessors. And these people are very highly qualified, which leads to only one conclusion, that the appointments process has been politicized in the hope of getting appointees ultimately to the bench who will be more political. This is wrong. It is a denial of justice, and I hope the bar will speak out against it strongly.

Otherwise, I don't have strong feelings about it. *[Laughter]* Thomas Jefferson once said that, "Equal justice is a vital part of the bright constellation that guides our political fates and our national life." I want to thank you, all of you, for your devotion to that goal, for making the law an honorable profession, and for believing in equal access.

I want to especially thank those who have given a lifetime and more, in 50 years of service, to the law of the land. I hope that with all the prosperity and progress our country enjoys, with all of the social indicators moving in the right direction, we will not let the indicator of justice move in the wrong direction. I hope that you will continue to stand for equal access, work for it, and urge others to follow your example.

Thank you very much, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 7:05 p.m. in the Willow Room at the Atheneum Suites Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to Alfred M. Butzbaugh, president, Michigan State Bar Association; Judge Harold Hood, chair, Michigan Supreme Court Task Force on Racial/Ethnic Issues in the Courts; Mayor Dennis W. Archer of Detroit; Leonard Grossman, board member, Guild Law Center for Economic and Social Justice; Judge Damon J. Keith, former Judge, U.S. Court of Appeals for the Sixth Circuit; and Gov. George H. Ryan of Illinois.

Remarks at a Michigan Victory 2000 Reception in Livonia, Michigan

September 21, 2000

The President. Thank you. If Jennifer had just given me credit for the Sun coming up in the morning, I would have been sure I was at a Republican rally. *[Laughter]* I mean, look up here. I'm basically here as an affirmative action prop so the men wouldn't be too outnumbered.

I want to thank Jennifer Granholm for her introduction, for her service, for holding the flag of the Democratic Party high in Michigan. And for her, there will be life after the attorney general's office. I'll guarantee you that.

I want to thank Dianne Byrum for running for Congress. You get a two-fer if she's elected. You'll have a great Member of Congress, a great successor to Debbie Stabenow, and you'll help make John Conyers chairman of the Judiciary Committee. I want to thank Matt Frumin for running for Congress and for proving that Democrats can tie and wear bow ties. I've never been able to do that. See, look at Orson Porter down there laughing. He wears a bow tie every day, and I still can't do it, and I'm 54. *[Laughter]*

I want to thank Marty Robinson for running for the supreme court. She's out here somewhere. We thank her. I want to thank Carolyn Cheeks Kilpatrick for being a great Representative and a great personal friend to me in these years that she has served.

And I don't know what to say about John Dingell. But when I was at the Congressional Black Caucus dinner the other night—I mean about John Conyers—I want to say something about John Dingell, but I'm going

to save that. I want to tell you something about John Conyers. I was at the Congressional Black Caucus dinner the other night. And all these people got up and talked about how the caucus always had their back, how good they were—always. Even the Ambassador from South Africa talked about—when they gave an award to Nelson Mandela—and she was passionate about how the Black Caucus was always there, always had their back. The Vice President got up and said the caucus always had his back.

I got up and said, “Covered my back? When they came after me with a torch and lit the fire, John and the Black Caucus brought the buckets and poured water on it, and I appreciate it.” [Laughter]

I want to say something very serious about Debbie Stabenow. I was here at an event for her not so long ago—or two events. It is, next to a certain race in New York, the Senate seat that I may feel the strongest about. [Laughter] Nobody in America now appreciates the importance of every single Senate seat as much as I do. They confirm judges. They can hold up bills. They can hold up judges, including two from Michigan that should have been confirmed a long time ago. In the Senate, except for the budget, 41 Senators, not a majority—41—can stop anything from happening. And I can’t imagine a clearer choice, whether it’s on a real Patients’ Bill of Rights or a real drug benefit for seniors through Medicare or a real commitment to human rights and building one America or a real commitment to an economic policy that continues to benefit average people.

What she said is true. They’ve got more dollars. They should have. They earned them. [Laughter] They earned them. You want to see them vote, follow the money. And there’s nothing wrong with that. I believe in raising money. I think people ought to contribute. But forces that block positive change have to be opposed or they will prevail. And very rarely nowadays—it’s hard to find somebody to take on an incumbent Republican Senator.

Now we have a man who was brave enough to do it in Minnesota, but he’s independently wealthy. We have a wonderful woman who voted for my economic plan in 1993, lost her seat in the House, and is now

ahead in running against the incumbent Senator from Washington State. But she’s independently wealthy. Debbie Stabenow is just independent. [Laughter]

But it’s really true—even if they do have more dollars, I can tell you for sure, I know her well, she does have more sense. [Laughter] I’ve watched this thing very closely. I know if one person goes off the air and the other dumps several million on the air, you can move the numbers, but they’re not getting above 50 percent. She can win, and she will win if you will fight for her. And do not be discouraged. Do not give up. Fight. This is worth fighting for. It’s worth fighting for.

Now, I’ve got a little something substantive I want to say, but first I’ve got to say something about my young friend, Mr. McNamara. All the talk about Ireland and the trains and all that, this guy was there for me when only my mama thought I could be elected President. [Laughter] And this is his 74th birthday. So we’re going to sing “Happy Birthday.” Ready? One, two, three.

[At this point, the audience sang “Happy Birthday” to Wayne County Executive Edward H. McNamara]

Mr. McNamara. He is a much better President than he is a singer. [Laughter]

The President. You may be the only 74-year-old man in America with more than enough hot air to blow out those candles. [Laughter] Go blow those candles out. And make a wish.

Now, I just want to say a couple of other things. First, on behalf of Al Gore and Tipper and Hillary and me, I want to thank the people of Michigan and the Democrats of Michigan. You heard in the introduction that no Democrat had carried this State since 1968. Michigan gave me a margin of 8 points in 1992, and 13 points in 1996. And even before, on St. Patrick’s Day, in 1992, the voters in the Democratic primary in Michigan and Illinois ensured that I would be the nominee of my party. I will never forget that, ever.

Michigan is a special place with special leaders. One of them who’s not here tonight is John Dingell. I wanted to say that. I thank Debbie for being here, for carrying all of our water all these years and doing all this work. And I’m deeply indebted to a lot of people

from Michigan. Senator Riegle is here. And we worked 2 years together, and he was terrific. Jim Blanchard was great to me. But John Dingell is sort of a vanishing breed. He's just an old-style person who believes politics is an honorable profession and who believes that there's no point in being in office unless you're going to get something done or stand against something you don't believe in.

And so what I want to say to you is, you need to treat this election like you're going to get something done. And Michigan is really America. Yes, it's different than America; people make more cars here than anyplace else. But it's also an agricultural State; it's a small business State; it's a high-tech State. It's a place with worlds of—very remote rural communities and big thriving cities. It is America.

And what I want to say to you is, for 47 days it will be the center of the conflict between the Democrats and the Republicans for the Senate and the House, and between Al Gore and Joe Lieberman and Governor Bush and Secretary Cheney. And I was told on the way up here that the Republican nominee is coming here in a day or two and is going to stand in an automobile factory and blast Al Gore over the internal combustion engine. The only thing I want you to remember is, when you voted for me, when they had the White House the last time, not very many people could afford to buy an internal combustion engine or fill it up.

We've had a real partnership with the people of Michigan, and I've worked, when I could, on a bipartisan basis. We've had a partnership that's helped to lower the welfare rolls, to lower the unemployment rates, and lift the State up. We've also had a very important partnership with the UAW and the automobile industry to build the next-generation vehicles.

Now, you all are following what's going on with the oil prices—and I don't want to say much tonight. Otherwise it will be a big story tomorrow, and I'm going to have more to say about it later. But the point I want to make is, one of the reasons we're doing better than we were the last time this happened is that the American people have become much more energy-efficient; our cars get bet-

ter mileage; our homes are more energy-efficient; our factories are more energy-efficient.

And we know—we know that the work being done now with high-tech companies, with the major auto companies and the UAW—work that our administration has supported financially and otherwise to build a next-generation vehicle that can get 70 or 80 miles a gallon or use fuel cells or use electricity and gasoline or use alternative fuels that don't pollute the atmosphere, that we can make here from an unlimited supply of other things.

Let me just say, you know this whole business about ethanol and farm-based fuel products, right now the reason we don't have more of it is, it takes about 7 gallons of gasoline to produce about 8 gallons of ethanol. But we are funding research, which is very close to making a breakthrough that is the equivalent of what happened when crude oil was broken down so that it could be refined into gasoline. And when that happens—when that happens, you'll be able to make 8 gallons of ethanol for about 1 gallon of gasoline, and the whole world will change. That is what Al Gore has been doing the last 8 years.

And whatever they tell you in the next 47 days—I'm not running for anything, but I've got a record in Michigan—if I were trying to cost you jobs, I've done a poor job of it. Now, if we develop new engines, new fuel cells, and new fuels, it will save the automobile industry in Michigan, not destroy it. It will be more prosperous than ever before.

And every single year I have had to fight the other party in Congress for funds for the Partnership for the Next Generation Vehicle, for funds to promote energy conservation, for funds to develop alternative sources of fuel to keep our automobile industry strong and our people able to afford to drive and our country more secure—every single year.

So what we need is not to stick our heads in the ground and deny that there's a challenge; what we need is what we've had, a genuine partnership that will save America's auto industry, create more jobs, and lower our alliance on expensive and unreliable fuel. We can do that together if we do it.

Now, let me just say something else. In the last few weeks, since the convention,

where I thought the Vice President and Senator Lieberman made great speeches and laid our program out for the American people, our side has been doing pretty well. And their side has had a few problems. [Laughter] But one of the things I've learned in life is that all those martial arts people—you ever watch those martial arts, the judo and karate contests or the Tae Kwon-Do contests? You know what they do before every match? They bow to their opponents. Why do they do that? Because they know that the surest sign of defeat is to disrespect your opponent, to underestimate your opponent, to have contempt for your opponent.

So I have said all along, why don't we just call a moratorium on personal abuse and attacks? Why don't we posit the fact that our adversaries are patriots and good people; they love their families. And why don't we thank them for abandoning, or at least appearing to abandon, the 20 years of negative politics that they have brought to this country's political life and talk in a more inclusive way and thank them for that and say, "Okay, let's have an election on the differences."

And I can just tell you, I have worked hard to turn this economy around, but the best is out there. Believe me. As good as everything is, the best stuff is still out there. If you make the right decisions, we could bring jobs and economic opportunity to people and places that haven't felt it yet.

I was in Flint today to highlight the possibilities of the Internet to educate, empower, and employ people from Michigan with disabilities. And it's stunning. I was able to talk in Flint—because we had one of the machines there, this new laser technology that operates with the eyes—about a friend of mine from North Carolina who has Lou Gehrig's disease, who can no longer move any part of his body. He can't speak, and he can't move. And when we were friends and working together in the eighties, he was a strapping, healthy, charismatic, handsome, active, vital guy. But he's an even greater person now because of the courage with which he's proceeded. But because of new technology, he is about to publish a book he wrote on the computer with his eyes. Now, because of new technology, he still can work

at home and earn a living in doing business at the bank he used to run—unbelievable.

So I'm telling you, the best of it is still out there. If you make the right decisions, in the next decade you can get rid of child poverty; you can give all working families access to affordable health insurance; we can take Social Security and Medicare out beyond the life of the baby boomers. We can get this country out of debt for the first time since 1835. We can generate more jobs in transportation, including automobiles, by developing cars that get 80 or 90 or more miles to the gallon. And we can clean up the environment and generate hundreds of thousands, maybe even millions more jobs. We can do all this stuff if you make the right decisions. We've opened the doors of 2 years of college to all Americans. We can open the doors of 4 years of college to all Americans, if you make the right decisions.

Every time I see Debbie out here making this campaign, and I realize she could have just stayed in Congress and enjoyed her seat, rolled along, she knew what she was up against—what I see are all the little children that will grow up with a better education, have access to college, all the older people that will have real medicine when they need it, a genuine Patients' Bill of Rights so that the doctors, not the HMO's, will be making your health care decisions, and an America with a stronger economy.

And when I see Al Gore and Joe Lieberman, I am telling you, they have a different economic policy. You cannot—you cannot—I don't care what they tell you these projected surpluses are. Believe me, they're just projected. And because I was conservative with your money every year—every year—first the deficits were less than they were supposed to be, and then the surpluses were bigger. But, why? Because I didn't play like it was, and I didn't play games with your money.

Now, they say we've got a \$1.8 trillion, or \$2.2 trillion, projected surplus. That sounds like a lot of money. What they don't tell you is, that doesn't assume that Government spending will grow with inflation and population, which it's done for 50 years—whack \$300 billion off. What they don't tell you is that those of you who are upper middle class

people, if we don't continue to raise the earnings limit on the alternative minimum tax, you'll start paying taxes you've got no business paying just because you get a pay raise. So we fix that—whack another \$150 billion off. What they don't tell you is that we don't have in there continuing the research and development tax credit, which we've got to do if you want to develop these new cars that get high mileage—whack another \$40 billion off. You get the idea. And then the money may not come in. And what about the emergencies that could come up along the way? We've had to give the farmers \$6 billion, \$8 billion, \$10 billion every year for the last 3 years because farm prices have been so bad.

Now, so when they tell you, "Hey, what do we care? Our tax cut is a trillion and a half dollars, and we'll privatize Social Security for young people and guarantee everybody over 55 that they'll get their benefits," and when you transfer that, it costs a trillion dollars more, because if you take money out of Social Security, but you leave everybody drawing out the same money, somebody has got to replace it, right? They don't ever talk about that. That's another trillion—whack \$2.3 trillion, \$2.5 trillion, \$2.8 trillion. You're already back in deficits.

They don't ever say that. I'm telling you, that means higher interest rates. That means higher interest rates. Do you know what—I got a study last week that said the difference in our candidate's economic plan and theirs, going back into deficit, into the Social Security Trust Fund, is one percent a year on interest rates. Do you know what that's worth to you? Listen to this: \$390 billion in home mortgages, \$30 billion in car payments, and \$15 billion in college loan payments over a decade.

In other words, if you do what Vice President Gore wants to do, in interest savings alone, you'll get the equivalent of a \$425 billion tax cut that will go straight to the working families of the United States of America.

So we've got a different—we have a different economic policy, a different energy policy, a different education policy. We want high standards, smaller classes, modern schools. We want schools to get more aid, but we want to turn around these schools

or put them under new management, because we know we can turn schools around.

I was in a school in Harlem the other day, in New York. Two years ago 80 percent of the kids—80 percent—doing reading and math below grade level; 2 years later 74 percent doing reading and math at or above grade level—in 2 years. We can turn these things around. And they didn't do it by taking limited public funds with the largest number of school children in history and siphoning it off into a voucher program. They did it with high standards and accountability.

If you want more choice for parents, pass a statewide school choice plan, have more public charter schools. But we don't have enough money in education now. We've got more kids than ever before. We've got all these facilities that are inadequate. We've got all these schools we still have to hook up to the Internet. We need more preschool and after-school programs. And I'm telling you, the Gore plan is what we've been trying to build on. Just make the money accountable. Say, "Okay, we'll give you the money, but you've got to identify the failing schools and turn them around or put them under new management. You don't have to put up with schools that don't work." That's what the teachers want. That's what the good principals want. And that's the right thing to do.

We have a different human rights policy. We're for employment nondiscrimination. We're for a hate crimes bill. We're for one America. We have a different health care policy. We're for a real Patients' Bill of Rights and a real Medicare drug program.

Now, if you want these things, and you want to achieve these big goals, you've got to make the right decision. What Debbie told you was right. Look, this is the first time in 26 years I haven't been on the ballot, and most days I'm okay about it. *[Laughter]* I tell everybody; my party has a new leader; my family has a new candidate; my new official title is Cheerleader in Chief.

But I have loved this job, and I have been honored to serve. But you have got to know something; you've got to believe me on this. We spent a lot of time, John and Carolyn and Debbie and Don Riegle and everybody else that served with me in the Congress—we spent a lot of time just trying to turn the

ship of state around and get it going back in the right direction and get America coming together instead of being driven apart. And in my lifetime, there's never been this much prosperity and promise and progress.

Anybody that's lived to be 30 years of age or more will tell you, there's been at least one time in your life when you've made a mistake, not because times were tough but because they were so good, you quit concentrating. [Laughter] Sometimes it's harder to make a good decision when times are good than when they're bad. You get lulled along. You think there's no real consequence. You just sort of feel one day—one way one day and one way another day.

And you believe stuff like this tax stuff they're saying, based on the projected surplus. I told somebody the other day, this projected surplus tickles me. This is like those letters you get in the mail from Publishers Clearing House. Did you ever get one? Ed McMahon wrote you a personal letter and told you, "You may have won \$10 million." You may have. Did you go spend the money the next day? If you did, you should seriously consider voting for the Republicans. But if you didn't—if you didn't, you'd better stick with us. I'm dead serious. The best stuff is still out there. When Al Gore says, "You ain't seen nothing yet," that's not just a campaign statement. That's just not something that sounds good. That is the truth, but we have to make the right decision. You need this crowd behind you. You need them all.

Now, if you take this Senate race, down deep inside, people in Michigan know that. Otherwise, with all this money that has been spent against Debbie, the other fellow would be above 50 percent, and he's not there yet, not by a good stretch.

So I'm telling you, she can win, and she has to win. Al Gore and Joe Lieberman have to win. But there are 47 days, and there will be a lot of twists and turns in this race before it's over. Respect our opponents. Say they're good people. Say we have honest differences. Tell people, even though times are good, the best is still out there. Clarify the differences. Give people the focus. Don't get tired. We'll have a great victory in November.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:20 p.m. at the Laurel Manor. In his remarks, he referred to Jennifer M. Granholm, Michigan State attorney general; Dianne Byrum, candidate for Michigan's Eighth Congressional District; Representative Debbie Stabenow, candidate for U.S. Senate from Michigan; Matt Frumin, candidate for Michigan's 11th Congressional District; Marietta Robinson, candidate for the Michigan Supreme Court; former Gov. James J. Blanchard and former Senator Donald W. Riegle, Jr., of Michigan; South African Ambassador to the U.S. Sheila Sisulu; former President Nelson Mandela of South Africa; and Republican Presidential and Vice Presidential candidates Gov. George W. Bush and Dick Cheney. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Remarks on the Dedication of the Harry S. Truman Building

September 22, 2000

Thank you very much, and good afternoon. Secretary Albright, thank you for your remarks and your leadership. My longtime friend Ike Skelton and the other members of the Missouri congressional delegation, thank you for this great gift to America and to our children.

John Truman and the members of the Truman family, we welcome you here. We are honored by your presence. And I'd like to say a special word of personal thanks on behalf of Hillary and myself to Margaret Truman Daniel for her uncommon kindness and concern for the First Lady and our daughter, for nearly 9 years now. We are thinking about her in what has been a hard year.

I was telling John Truman when we came out here that Margaret came to dinner with her late husband several years ago at the White House, and I rather cavalierly, along with Hillary, had her to dinner in the private dining room on the second floor. And I did a little research right before she came and discovered that that had been her music room when she was a young lady living in the White House with another First Family that had only one child, a daughter.

And so I asked her, I said, "Margaret, how do you like this dining room?" And she said, "Well, Mr. President, I like you, but I really don't think people should eat on the same

floor they sleep.”[*Laughter*] And I felt as if I were in the presence of Harry Truman all over again. [*Laughter*] So I dutifully got down my well-worn copy of David McCullough’s great biography, and I looked at the houses of Harry and Bess Truman in Independence, and sure enough, they were two-story houses, where the bedrooms were on the top floor and the dining room was on the ground floor.

I want to say to you, Mr. Elsey, I wish you had just taken the whole program. [*Laughter*] I could have listened to you for another hour and a half. And I think I speak for all the people in this audience in saying that we are grateful you are here to provide us a living account of a remarkable time and a great President. And we are grateful for your service to America, as well, and we thank you, sir.

And I want to thank James Earl Jones for being here, and also for his friendship to me over these years. I was so hoping, before I knew he would come, that there would be an African-American in this place at this time who could be the living embodiment of the remarkable steps Harry Truman took that put us on the road we still travel today.

You have made quite a showing in your life, Mr. Jones. But I can’t help thinking that in more modest and less famous ways, there are hundreds of thousands of others whose lives were also encouraged and advanced by Harry Truman’s courage. And we thank you for being here today to embody that.

Most of all, I would like to thank our Foreign Service and civil service employees who are here, who work every day to advance our interests and values around the world and to make us more free and more secure.

This is a very good thing we’re doing today. Listen to this: In 1956, at the close of his visit to Great Britain, the London Daily Telegraph called Harry Truman “the living and kicking symbol of everything everyone likes best about America.” That’s a pretty good reason for putting his name on the State Department. But it really doesn’t even get into the top 10, for history will credit Harry Truman for creating the architecture of post-war internationalism in politics and economics; for drawing the line against communism and for democracy, setting us squarely on the

trail of freedom we continue to blaze today; for leading America toward increasing prosperity and racial equality here at home; and for laying the groundwork for pioneering achievements in meeting America’s health care needs, even though he paid a dear price for it.

We are still blessed because President Truman understood the importance not just of winning the war but of building the institutions and alliances that could maintain the peace. What a job he did: the United Nations; NATO; the Truman Doctrine; the Berlin Airlift; Korea; and the Marshall plan.

Oh, yes, he was committed to military strength. But from the very beginning, he knew that peace could not be maintained and the cold war could not be won by military power alone. He told the National War College, behind the shield of military strength, “We must help people improve the conditions of life, to create a world in which democracy and freedom can flourish.” That’s an argument he had to make over and over and over again. I can identify with that.

In early 1947, the House cut in half President Truman’s request for funds to prevent starvation and disease in occupied Germany and Japan. He knew he had to turn that mentality around, but he believed he could. He would often say, “I trust the people, because when they know the facts, they do the right thing.”

So when he went before a joint session of Congress to call for emergency aid to keep Greece and Turkey from falling into the Communist orbit, he put it this way: “The United States contributed \$341 billion toward winning World War II. The assistance I recommend amounts to little more than one-tenth of one percent of that investment. It is only common sense that we should safeguard this investment and make sure it was not in vain.” With the leadership and support of like-minded Members of Congress, the bill was on his desk in 2 months, passed by overwhelming majorities in both Houses. And he fought the same way to win America over to the Marshall plan.

Harry Truman's unmatched insight allowed him to see emerging patterns in history, to identify new challenges over the horizon, and to build the institutions and approaches to meet them. Thanks, in no small measure, to President Truman, we have won the cold war and now must shoulder a like responsibility for meeting the challenges of a new century and a new era in human affairs.

With global interdependence growing daily, creating ever-new opportunities and new and different vulnerabilities, the need for U.S. leadership in the world has never been greater. The need for building on Harry Truman's legacy has never been greater.

But the old American pull of isolationism—or at least, in this age, cut-way-back-ism—is still there. We should remember what he said: “Lasting peace,” President Truman reminded us, “means bread and justice and opportunity and freedom for all the people of the world.” My fellow Americans, this is a great day, and this is a good thing. But we should do more than dedicate this building to Harry Truman. We should re-dedicate ourselves today to fulfilling his vision in the new century.

To paraphrase what he said so long ago, it means we have to put a small percentage of the resources we put into winning the cold war to work in the world in keeping the peace, advancing global prosperity, reducing poverty, fighting AIDS, battling terrorism, defending human rights, supporting free press and democracy around the world.

We need to move forward with debt relief for the world's poorest nations, to give them the lifeline they need to fight AIDS and educate their children and become better partners for us in the world. These are the kinds of investments Harry Truman proved decades ago could keep our soldiers out of war. If we do not want to overuse our military, we must not underfund our diplomacy.

I believe if President Truman were here today, he would tell us that if we truly want to honor him, we should prepare for the future in our time, as he prepared for our future in his. Those of us here today know that that means not only investing in foreign affairs; it also means investing in the capacity of our own people at home.

Truman once said, “The success of our foreign policy depends upon the strength of our domestic policy.” Well, he tried it, and it worked. By the close of his administration, he had helped to create 11 million new jobs; unemployment was at a record low; farm and business incomes at all-time highs; the minimum wage had increased; Social Security benefits had doubled; 8 million veterans had been to college on the GI bill; and our country had moved closer to one America, across the lines of race that divided us.

In 1947 President Truman was the first President ever to address the NAACP. His biographer, David McCullough, called it the strongest statement on civil rights heard in Washington since the time of Lincoln. President Truman said, “I meant every word, and I'm going to prove it.” And so he did, desegregating the Armed Forces and the Federal civil service and continuing to fight for civil rights gains.

He also envisioned a new system of health care for the elderly and affordable health insurance for all Americans. He led America on the first leg of a long march that would end in 1965, with the creation of Medicare. He endured vicious attacks, and his party lost the Congress in a record way, in no small measure because he simply thought that people, when they needed a doctor, ought to be able to get one.

But at the signing ceremony for Medicare several years later, the guest of honor was Harry Truman. President Johnson gave him the very first Medicare card and said, “It was really Harry Truman who planted the seeds of compassion and duty which have today flowered into care for the sick and serenity for the fearful.”

So at home and around the world, if we truly wish to honor President Truman, we will do in our day what he did so brilliantly in his: see clearly the long-term path we must follow, take the first steps without hesitation.

This is a kind of time Harry Truman must have dreamed of at the end of World War II, at the dawn of the cold war, in the bitterest, bleakest days of the conflict in Korea: an America at peace, with prosperity, social progress, no crippling internal crisis or external threat.

Like our victory in World War II, this opens a whole new era for us. It gives us great opportunities, enormous challenges, profound responsibilities. At home, we have the chance and the duty to meet the challenge of the aging of America; of the largest and most diverse group of schoolchildren in our Nation's history; of families struggling to balance the obligation to work with the more important obligation to raise their children well; to explore the far frontiers of science and technology in a way that benefits ordinary Americans and protects our most cherished values; to get this country out of debt for the first time since Andrew Jackson was President.

Around the world, we have to face the threat of proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, terrorism, narcotrafficking, the persistent, enduring ethnic, religious, tribal, and racial conflicts that grip so many places in the world, and new and different threats that could profoundly affect us all, including global warming and the rise of AIDS and other infectious diseases, along with the breakdown of public health systems around the world.

But we're well-positioned to deal with this, thanks in no small measure to what Harry Truman and his generation did so long ago. He gave us the opportunities we have today. It's a good thing that we say, thanks, Mr. President, by naming this building for him. It would be a far, far better thing if we would follow his lead and give the same set of opportunities to our grandchildren. I pray God that we will.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:33 p.m. outside the Harry S. Truman Building. In his remarks, he referred to President Truman's grand-nephew, John Ross Truman, and his daughter, Margaret Truman Daniel; George M. Elsey, former administrative assistant to President Truman; and actor James Earl Jones, master of ceremonies.

Statement on Signing the Religious Land Use and Institutionalized Persons Act of 2000

September 22, 2000

Today I am pleased to sign into law S. 2869, the "Religious Land Use and Institutionalized Persons Act of 2000," which will provide important protections for religious exercise in America. This Act will, in certain cases, forbid State and local governments from imposing a substantial burden on the exercise of religion unless they could demonstrate that imposition of such a burden is the least restrictive means of furthering a compelling governmental interest. The Act would protect the exercise of religion in two situations: (1) where State and local governments seek to impose or implement a zoning or landmark law in a manner that imposes a substantial burden on religious exercise and (2) where State and local governments seek to impose a substantial burden on the religious exercise of persons residing or confined to certain institutions.

I applaud the Congress, particularly Senators Kennedy, Hatch, Reid, and Schumer, and Representatives Canady and Nadler for their hard work in passing this legislation. The Religious Land Use and Institutionalized Persons Act will provide protection for one of our country's greatest liberties—the exercise of religion—while carefully preserving the civil rights of all Americans. Just as I fully supported the Religious Freedom Restoration Act in 1993, I support Senator Kennedy's and Hatch's bill. Religious liberty is a constitutional value of the highest order, and the Framers of the Constitution included protection for the free exercise of religion in the very first Amendment. This Act recognizes the importance the free exercise of religion plays in our democratic society.

I also want to thank the Coalition for the Free Exercise of Religion and the civil rights community for the central role they played in crafting this legislation. Their work in passing this legislation once again demonstrates

that people of all political bents and faiths can work together for a common purpose that benefits all Americans.

William J. Clinton

The White House,
September 22, 2000.

NOTE: S. 2869, approved September 22, was not received by the Office of the Federal Register in time for assignment of a Public Law number.

**Digest of Other
White House Announcements**

The following list includes the President's public schedule and other items of general interest announced by the Office of the Press Secretary and not included elsewhere in this issue.

September 17

In the morning, the President traveled to Philadelphia, PA, and in the afternoon, he returned to Washington, DC.

September 18

In the morning, the President met with former Prime Minister Shimon Peres of Israel in the Oval Office.

September 19

In the evening, the President attended a book-signing in honor of former aide Paul Begala's new book at West 24 restaurant.

The President announced his intention to appoint Leslie Russell Jin as Staff Director of the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights.

The President announced his intention to accord David R. Andrews the rank of Ambassador in his capacity as Special Negotiator for U.S./Iran Claims.

The President announced his intention to appoint Alfred Cho, Arthur Jaffe, Elizabeth Neufeld, and William Lester as members of the President's Committee on the National Medal of Science.

September 20

In the afternoon, the President met with Prime Minister Giuliano Amato of Italy in the Cabinet Room.

September 21

In the morning, the President traveled to Flint, MI, where he toured the Disability Network and viewed a demonstration of handicapped-accessible technologies. Later, he traveled to Detroit and Livonia. In the evening, he returned to Washington, DC, arriving after midnight.

The President announced his intention to nominate Daniel P. Burnham to be the Chair of the National Security Telecommunications Advisory Committee.

The President announced his intention to nominate Donald Fixico to be a member of the National Council on the Humanities.

**Nominations
Submitted to the Senate**

The following list does not include promotions of members of the Uniformed Services, nominations to the Service Academies, or nominations of Foreign Service officers.

Submitted September 22

Mary Lou Leary,
of Virginia, to be an Assistant Attorney General, vice Laurie O. Robinson, resigned.

**Checklist
of White House Press Releases**

The following list contains releases of the Office of the Press Secretary that are neither printed as items nor covered by entries in the Digest of Other White House Announcements.

Released September 18

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Joe Lockhart

Transcript of a press briefing by Deputy Assistant to the President for Health Policy Chris Jennings on a report on a low-income prescription drug plan

Released September 19

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Joe Lockhart

Released September 20

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Joe Lockhart

Transcript of a press briefing by Special Assistant for Economic Policy Tom Kalil and National Economic Council Director Gene Sperling on digital opportunity for all Americans

Statement by the Press Secretary on Independent Counsel Robert Ray's Whitewater investigation

Statement by Press Secretary on the upcoming visit of Prime Minister Wim Kok of The Netherlands

Fact sheet: President Clinton Accepts German Media Prize

Released September 21

Statement by the Press Secretary on the President's reaction to the Iranian Court of

Appeal's decision in the espionage case against Jewish Iranians

Released September 22

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Joe Lockhart

**Acts Approved
by the President**

Approved September 19

H.R. 4040 / Public Law 106-265

To amend title 5, United States Code, to provide for the establishment of a program under which long-term care insurance is made available to Federal employees, members of the uniformed services, and civilian and military retirees, provide for the correction of retirement coverage errors under chapters 83 and 84 of such title, and for other purposes